« Fight for your right to… »

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Explaining social movement outcomes in France: a case study of four movements

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Abstract

This thesis concerns the outcome of social movements and why do some social movements succeed and others fail. By using various types of social movement literature I present a set of factors that have been known to influence outcomes. These concern the tactical repertoire and characteristics of the movement and the movement organizations. Of context relevant variables I pay heed to the existence of allies, fluctuations in public opinion and the tactics of authorities, which remains an understudied field of research within the field of social movements. I contend that a mix of movement characteristics and political context variables best explain the four movements.

The cases in this thesis have carefully been selected so as to make up two successes and two failures in order to facilitate comparison. Using newspaper data, official reports and scholarly literature I seek to unravel the very complex relationships and go beyond simply finding a correlation between cause and effect by establishing whether plausible links can be found.

My findings are that disruption and size of the movement are important determinants which are aided by both novelty and variety in actions. I also find that bureaucratization can both be a blessing and a curse. The latter is the case when organizations start thinking about their own survival rather than obtaining the best possible outcome, which can lead to a factionalization of the movement. Allies are relatively unimportant for explaining outcomes, but remained significant in the 2006 movement when they stalled the debates enough for mobilization to strengthen. Regarding public opinion it cannot alone explain social movement outcomes, as some have claimed. Movements are the most successful when they manage to influence the preferences of the public positively. Finally, the actions of authorities bear heavily on the end result by curtailing mobilization and forcing measures and reforms through parliament. I thus find that disruptive, big and united movements that employ a varied repertoire in a political context with favourable public opinion, substantial political allies and absence of specific authority strategies are the most likely to produce a favourable outcome. The main implications for future research are that it should include an increased focus on authority strategies and focus on both movement and context related variables.

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Abbreviations

SMO = Social Movement Organization
POS = Political Opportunity Structure
RD = Relative Deprivation
PAT = Protest Avoidance Tactics
RM = Resource Mobilization
INSEE = Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques
CSA = Conseil Sondage Analyses
IMF = International Monetary Fund
CAJ = Collectif Assistance Juridique
CFDT = Confédération française démocratique du travail
CGT = Confédération générale du travail
FO = Force Ovrière
PS = Partie Socialiste
PC = Partie Communiste
UMP = Union Mouvement Populaire
CFTC = Conféderation française des travailleurs chrétiens
CFE-CGC = Conféderation française de l'encadrement – Confédération générale des cadres
G-10 = Groupe des dix
FSU = Féderation syndicale unitaire
SUD = Union Syndicale Solidaires
RATP = Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens
SNCF = Société Nationale des Chemins de fer français
CPE = Contrat Premier Embauche
CNE = Contrat Nouvelle Embauche
EDF = Électricité de France
MEDEF = Mouvement des entreprises de France
UNSA = Union nationale des syndicats autonomes
RTT = Réduction du temps de travail
UNEF = Union Nationale des Étudiants de France
FSE = Fédération syndicale étudiante
LRU = Loi relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités
MoDem = Mouvement démocrate

"Aux armes, citoyens,
Formez vos battaillons
Marchons, marchons
Qu'un sang impur
Abreuve nos sillons"
La Marseillaise

1.0 Introduction

The above quotation comes from the French National Anthem "la Marseillaise", written just after the French Revolution in 1792. It illustrates the topic of this thesis in two ways. First of all because of its content alluding to violence, people marching and trying to *oppose* a corrupt political system. This last connotation is particularly relevant for me as I intend to study how a movement[1] can obtain a favourable outcome when interacting with the state. Contentious interaction with the state is particularly prevalent in French history. Asides from the Revolution of 1789 one can mention the revolutions in 1830 or 1848. Another example is the "commune" in 1871, when workers joined together and took over Paris for over a month. Through collective action such as demonstrations and barricading, the people managed to hold the capital for quite some time. More contemporary events such as the strikes of 1936 or the enormous protests in 1968 have changed society and policies (Shorter and Tilly 1974; Tilly 1986). Contention seems to have been a recurring part of everyday life for several centuries.

The second way in which the quote represents this thesis in a good way is that "la Marseillaise" is the current National Anthem, which illustrates the lingering and latent political contentious culture erupting every now and then in French society. This study is thus a look at contemporary contentious France, which is just as vibrant as before. For example, during several weeks in the autumn of 2010 strikes, demonstrations and occupations blocked the whole country in an attempt by workers, students and others to stop the planned reforms to

[1] I will throughout the thesis denote the cases as social movements, protest movements or simply movements. This is purely for stylistic and linguistic reasons.

the pension system. This contemporary culture of contention is captured in the work by Dalton, Van Sickle and Weldon (2010). They find that French people are more favourable to using protest activities, defined as petitions, boycotts, lawful demonstrations, unofficial strikes or occupations, than citizens from most other countries.

This culture of contention has materialized in similar movements to the one in 2010. In 2006, universities and schools were occupied for several weeks and streets were ablaze with demonstrations and strikes. Paris and province alike was blocked when in 2003 another strong anti-reform movement emerged. Also in 1995 a massive movement, lead by railroad workers, opposed yet another social reform. The movements were similar in many respects: they mobilized millions of people; concerned worker and/or student related issues; and enjoyed broad popular support. In one very distinctive way, however, did they differ, and that is in their outcome. In fact, the 1995 and the 2006 movement both succeeded and repelled the reform, whereas the 2003 and 2010 movement failed and reform was implemented[2]. This may seem as a puzzle. How come some apparently similar movements succeed and others fail? Why is this so? This leads to the research question:

Why do some social movements succeed and others fail? What factors and mechanisms influence the outcome of a social movement?

As can be seen my dependent variable is the outcome of social movements, namely whether they succeed or fail. I seek to identify the factors that influence this dependent variable and thereby answer the question why some fail and some succeed. In addition to explaining the outcomes of the four movements the goal of this thesis is twofold. First, I would like to increase knowledge of French protest movements, their interactions with the state and the factors influencing the outcome of these interactions. My second goal is broader. I wish to contribute to the burgeoning literature on the outcomes of protest movements. I hope to be able to shed light on the links between the actions and characteristics of the movement as well the political context, and different outcomes. I especially believe that an increased focus on the targets of protest must be taken into consideration and their actions must be analyzed. They should, just as the people participating in the movements, be considered as rational actors that seek to implement their own goals. They will consequently apply tactics and

[2] See table 1 on page 49 for a quick overview of the principal dates and actors of the movements

strategies that will increase their own chances of success. This has to a great extent been overseen in the existing literature (Ingram et al. 2010). I believe that including these dynamic elements will help understand the relationship between social movement and state.

1.1 Defining social movements

Social movements have been defined in a plethora of different ways in the literature (Snow et al. 2004: 6). According to Snow et al. (2004: 11) social movements can be defined as "*collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are part*". This very broad definition points to some important notions. The first lesson is that the degree of organization and continuity of a movement may vary. The actors act outside regular channels of influence, meaning that they make use of unconventional politics, and they do so in order to challenge or defend authorities, very broadly defined.

I believe this definition captures the essential characteristics of the cases. The four movements all contain various degrees of organization and they take place over a certain period of time. One might however contend that many of the actors, or Social Movement Organizations (SMOs), enjoy regular access to the polity and as such the cases are not truly social movements according to the definition. Indeed, the unions, which make up the main part of the SMOs, are regularly contacted and negotiate with the state. However, it is important to remember that the movements in question occur precisely when negotiations do not take place, have collapsed or are deemed insufficient by the claimants (Lindvall 2011). As such they are *acting* outside the institutional channels. In fact the unions employ conventional and unconventional behaviour, including demonstrations, strikes, occupations and sit-ins. The various actions by which influence can be obtained can be distinguished between what is conceived as conventional politics and unconventional politics (Dalton 2008:65). These are more or less radical ways of *trying* to influence political decisions. It can range from voting and interest groups which are seen as conventional politics to petitions, boycotts, demonstrations, occupations and strikes which are part of unconventional or unorthodox political behaviour. What I am interested in is the ways social movements *as a whole* are able to influence the state. As such the tactical repertoire is merely individual components of the

movements and can be seen as a potential independent variable influencing the outcome, rather than the unit of analysis. Lastly the movements all seek to challenge authorities by opposing proposed reforms. This may set these movements apart, since most social movement research concern pro-active claims. However, I see this as a strength that can contribute profoundly to existing research, which I will discuss further below.

1.2 Justification of research question

Why this research question? Along with the feeling of belonging and identity, the obvious reason why people participate in social movements is that they would like to see someone/something change/or remain the same. Therefore, it should be of prime concern, both for people in general and for researchers, to try to understand what makes some social movements successful and others not. Many researchers also focus on social movements precisely *because* they believe them to be important (Burstein and Linton 2002: 384) During the past 30-40 years there has been a growing understanding both among students of social movements and citizens that social movements and protest are in fact rational means of influencing the polity (Meyer 2004). With this acknowledgment it becomes more and more important to understand the intricate ways in which different outcomes come about. Protest and social movements have been known to bring about major changes in the world. This includes the French Revolution, the revolutions that shook Europe during the late 1840s, the student movement of the 60s and even environmental and anti-nuclear movements of the 80s and 90s. So is also the case in contemporary France. These episodes are some of the most important events in France, and the outcomes of these have long-lasting consequences for people in general, participants, the economy and politicians alike. As such the conclusions of this study will surely be interesting for other than scholars.

As King, Keohane and Verba (1994) argue, it is not enough for a research question to be relevant for the "real-life world". It also has to contribute to an accumulation of knowledge within the literature. During the 1990s Giugni and others (1998:373; Kriesi et al. 1995:207) noted that little research had been done regarding how to explain the outcome of social movements. There has been much improvement over the past years, and as such the study is not of an exploratory nature (Amenta et al. 2010; Lijphart 1971). This thesis aims to test existing theories and build upon what has already been studied. Two clear shortcomings become apparent from the literature. The first one is linked to the variables. A lot of

"correlation" research has been conducted and thus the mechanisms that link cause and effect are badly understood. It is not enough to simply establish that a correlation exists, one needs to explain whether and in what way they are associated with the outcome. In many cases it appears as a black box to use the terminology of Elster (1998:70). For example, it is not enough to observe that a bureaucratic organization exists and that an outcome follows. One has to go within and see whether the outcome was *facilitated* by that variable or not. Furthermore, several independent variables have theoretically, empirically and logically differing effects (Della Porta and Diani 2006). This is also linked to the lack of specific variables and the frequent use of overarching concepts such as "strong state" and "favourable political opportunities" (Amenta et al. 2002). As such this intensive case study of four movements will help clarify the links between the variables and also how they interact.

The second big problem with the literature is that it focuses to a large degree on the US, either exclusively or as part of a comparative framework. Very few try to depart from the US context completely (Amenta et al. 2010; Kriesi et al. 1995; Uba 2007). In fact, of all social movement articles published in 11 well-know scholarly journals between 1990 and 2007, 75% concerned the United States, whereas only 3% focused on Western Europe (Uba 2009: 436-437). My study therefore contributes to existing research by adding a new and different political context. When it comes to the nature of the movements in this thesis they are also somewhat different from what other studies have focused on. The cases in my study, the 1995, 2003, 2006 and 2010 movement, are all defensive, re-active movements that mobilize in response to unpopular bills and reforms. Most studies, have on the contrary concentrated on pro-active movements, although there are a few exceptions (Béland and Marier 2006; Doherty et al. 2003; Ingram et al. 2010; Uba 2007). This thesis will therefore bring new understanding to the analysis of such movements and can also highlight whether some variables act differently regarding these kinds of movements or in this particular context. As a side-note one can also mention the need for synthetic and comparative work on French movements in general. This is to a large degree lacking in the literature, even in the French one. As such the current study will also be of interest to French movement scholars.

This study will therefore be a contribution that can help the accumulation of knowledge within the field of protest and social movements at the same time as it will be relevant for actors outside of the scholarly sphere.

1.3 The outline of the thesis

In the next chapter I will develop the theoretical framework of the thesis. I will first discuss various general social movement currents. These veins of scholarship have all lead to important insights, notions and concepts that will be essential in the following part where I present specific theories concerning the outcome of social movements. I will focus on both movement-specific variables as well as context-variables (II). In the third chapter I present my method of choice. I conduct a multiple case study of four French protest movements (III). The fourth chapter concerns the four movements. For each movement a detailed timeline is presented with a following discussion regarding the outcome of the movement. I then go on to discuss each and every variable in order to establish whether it can be said to have any causal effect (IV). The last chapter summarizes and compares the findings of each movement. This is also where I come with my final conclusions (V).

2.0 Theoretical and conceptual framework

I will first go through the traditional social movement literature in general. This is to give an overview of the different currents in the literature on social movements and protest, but also to introduce important notions and concepts such as deprivation and grievances, social movement organizations, and political opportunities. I begin by discussing the different schools of social movement theory, starting with collective behaviour theory, then the rational choice and resource mobilization paradigm, and finally political opportunity structure. I will show that none of these currents can escape criticism, but that they still present useful concepts that help make sense of the cases in my thesis. After that I present a theoretical framework relating more specifically to research on outcomes of social movements. I start this part by discussing the concept of success and outcomes and present a definition of this. Thereafter I present the most well-known theories regarding movement outcomes. I end up with a theoretical framework that incorporates both movement-centred factors and political context factors.

2.1 Classical and collective behaviour theories

One of the first to study the phenomena of movements was Gustav le Bon (1960). Writing at the end of the 19th century he referred to them as "crowds". His theory is psychological and seeks to explain what happens to an individual when he participates in a crowd. This crowd is inferior to the individual and is good at acting but not at reasoning. Inside the crowd individuals lose their autonomy. Acting by instinct, they become primitive beings (Le Bon 1960: 16).

Although this largely negative view was toned down in the later current of collective behaviour theories, the negative experiences with fascism and Nazism during the interwar period still influenced these theories to see social movements as both irrational and dangerous (Meyer 2004). According to McAdam (1982, 2003) another factor that influenced the view on social movements was the widespread pluralist conception of politics among movement scholars. Dahl was one of the most prominent defenders of this view especially through his famous book *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (1961). According

to him policy-makers are receptive of this outside influence, and all social groups have access to the political system through the normal channels of influence. This meant that social movements using unconventional means of politics such as demonstrations, occupations etc., were acting outside what was seen as real, conventional politics and as such were irrational and un-needed (McAdam 1982:2).

The broad category of classical theories includes different theories that share several similarities. First of all they see collective behaviour as being a reaction to social strain. Secondly, this strain puts different kinds of psychological pressure on individuals, meaning that the unit of analysis is individuals. Thirdly, the motivation to participate is not so much the desire to attain a goal as it is the need to manage the psychological tensions of the stressful situation (McAdam 1982:8-9). Thus, protest is seen as abnormal and irrational (Neveu 2005). I will exemplify these classical theories through a more thorough discussion of the arguably most famous component: Deprivation Theory.

2.1.1 Deprivation theory

This highly influential theory, which was coined by Gurr (1970) as the "Relative Deprivation Theory" (RD) soon became popular but also drew much criticism. His extensive theory builds on the seminal book called "Why Men Rebel?". Gurr (1970) tries to explain why some people use political violence. The main idea is that deprivation leads to aggression which translates into collective political violence (Dalton and Kuechler 1990; Dalton 2008; Gurr 1970). A basic assumption is that the propensity for violence among "men" is contingent on the discrepancy between the collective value expectations and the respective value capabilities (Gurr 1970:13). Value expectations are what people feel entitled to of goods and conditions, whereas value capabilities are what people think they are actually able to acquire in their current situation (Gurr 1970:24). Thus, when the discrepancy between these two values increases, the individual will see his/her situation as less good. According to Gurr (1970) this will lead him/her to perform violent actions.

The relative deprivation approach remains mostly a psychological account of how frustration relating to grievances increases until collective action happens. Gurr (1970:15) recognizes that there are several societal variables that affect the degree of political violence. While these attitudes and societal conditions might be present in any given society for a prolonged period

of time, it is often when the RD increases dramatically that we witness political violence. RD is thus a catalyst for political violence (Gurr 1970:15). This approach has been used to explain both Civil Rights movement activism and the French Revolution (Dalton and Kuechler 1990:7). Gurr (1970) presents psychological, individual level evidence, but also historical accounts which increases the validity of his theory.

The theory has been heavily criticised by numerous scholars (Dalton 2008; McAdam 1982; Neveu 2005; Tarrow 1991, 1998). One criticism is that at any given time there will be some kinds of strain. Temporal confirmation of this theory can always be found, since grievances and strains will be present behind any movement (McCarthy and Zald 1979). However, it is less likely that one is able to find evidence on the level of strain and grievance over an extended period of time and relate this to different levels of social movement mobilization in different national contexts. One might say that social strain is a necessary, but not a sufficient cause of social movements and their use of protest politics (McAdam 1982: 11). In addition the link between the individual level of strain and collective action is hardly explained and the operationalization of the concept is lacking (McAdam 1982: 15; Neveu 2005: 43). Deprivation theory has also been challenged by many empirical studies (Dalton 2008; Kaase et al. 1979; McAdam 1982). Using World Values data Dalton (2008) for example shows that deprivation and marginalization seem to play marginal roles in deciding whether a person protests or not. On the contrary, education seems to *increase* the propensity to protest, which is contradictory to many of the conclusions of classical theory. Dalton et al. (2010) also find that there is generally very little correlation between deprivation and protest, but that it seems more plausible in less developed countries.

Another criticism is the lack of consideration for political variables and the fact that participation in social movements is explained through psychological variables. These variables often frame demonstrators as having an abnormal psychological profile. As a consequence we should not see the claims made through protest actions as serious or important, as they are per definition just a by-product of the real function of protest actions which is to let individuals air their frustration. Movements and protest are not seen as a means to achieve influence or political goals, but solely as a venue for personal fulfilment which instils a sense of solidarity in people (McAdam 1982; Neveu 2005).

2.2 Rational choice

Rational choice theory, springing out of Mancur Olsons' (1965) "The Logic of Collective Action", focused more on interest groups than social movements (Tarrow 1991:9). It has however been used extensively on social movements and its conclusions are very different from that of the "collective behaviour" current. What Olson (1965) pointed out was that it is in no way certain that collective action will come about even if the group of individuals has a goal they intend to obtain. This is because of the well-known free-rider problem which says that when benefits are attributed collectively individuals will have no incentive to participate as the person will still gain whatever benefit the movement obtains (if it obtains a benefit) without incurring any costs (Neveu 2005; Olson 1965). Selective incentives are needed for collective action to work. This could be insurance, money, extra benefits etc. Gamson (1975) largely confirms this by showing that organizations providing selective incentives are more likely to be heard and to succeed. However, this strong focus on economic variables and of people acting purely out of material interest has received much criticism (Neveu 2005:47; Dalton, Kuechler and Bürklin 1990:8). For one, the empirical evidence relating to the selective incentives approach has been challenged by for example Finkel and Muller (1998). They find that collective interests, such as belief in group's success and importance of own participation, are more consequential for participation than selective incentives and perceived costs. This is not a criticism of rational choice per se, but it questions much of the research that has been conducted using a rational choice approach. A more fundamental strain of criticism comes from New Social Movement theorists such as Touraine (1978) who asserts that there is too much focus on economic interests and one thereby misses out on the many people for whom identity is important, and where the claims are all but materialistic (claims to citizenship etc.) (Neveu 2005:63). A different kind of criticism comes from the people who claim that the rational choice theory does not enlighten us on what really happens. This has lead some people to call it a "black box" which in the end does not tell us anything about the mechanisms that are on display (Neveu 2005:48) Despite this criticism the approach has brought attention to the fact that mobilization is difficult, and cannot be assumed to happen automatically (Neveu 2005:48). This would soon be taken up by a different strand of theories, namely the Resource Mobilization approach.

2.3 Resource mobilization theory

It is important to note that while one refers to this as one theory it is in fact a cluster of theories. There is, according to Neveu (2005:49) a continuum of different theories that go from being fairly close to the rational choice approach of Olson, such as McCharty and Zald (1977) to the more sociological point of view of Oberschall (1973) or Tilly (1978)

The more Olsonian part of Resource Mobilization (RM) theory, incarnated by McCharty and Zald (1977) focuses naturally on economic incentives. However, instead of focusing exclusively on the selective incentives solution of the rational choice school, the authors introduce new and important concepts. One of these is the social movement organization (SMO) (Neveu 2005:51). This organization is, much like a firm, an entity that identifies the objectives of its participants and seeks to achieve these objectives in the best way. It also helps aggregating resources, which are very important for social movements (Giugni 2004:148) Adherents to this school see social movements as a tactical response to the fact that small elites hold almost all power, and focus the "attention to the Social Movements Organizations (SMO) that give meaning and direction to the movement" (Dalton, Kuechler and Bürklin 1990:9). These SMOs are part of what is called mobilizing structures which enable individuals to organize and participate in collective action (Garrett 2006: 203). Another important contribution of these theorists is asserting that there are potential contributors that are outside of the direct beneficiaries. These "conscience constituents" (Neveu 2005:52) can provide the movement with very important external resources. An increase of resources will make individuals able to create stable organizations. This will then help explain why some movements manage to mobilize more successfully than others, since it will often decrease the costs of action for participants. Oberschall (1973) expands the idea of resources and relates it to the group's identity strength; the stronger the ties between individuals, the more "resources" for the group. Strategies can also be seen as part of the resources of a movement.

A different current is exemplified by Tilly (1978). The first improvement of Tilly (1976) was his increased focus on the organizations and their "sociability". Whereas McCharty and Zald (1979) saw organizations as a logistic phenomenon Tilly (1978) felt that organizations were more than that. Identities of participants are included as an independent resource even to a greater extent than in Oberschall's (1973) theory (Neveu 2005:56-57). Tilly (1978) also

distinguishes between the challengers and the participants. However, he uses a more dynamic view of these groups as he points out that challengers will often be able to make alliances with certain weak participants in order to gain access to the system.

The Resource Mobilization approach has several strengths (McAdam 1982:23-24). First of all it establishes social movements as a political phenomenon that should be understood as such, and the organizational and political context are emphasized. It establishes an understanding of social movements that includes relations with other movements and with other actors. Furthermore it sees, much like Olson (1965), the participants of social movements as rational actors who act, not as a treatment of abnormal psychological traits, which is the conclusion of many classical theories, but in order to achieve personal goals and interests. Lastly, attention is directed to the internal organization of social movements which is important for understanding any social movement.

As the lower classes are seen as completely powerless by many theorists of this school, they see elite involvement as crucial in the development of protest on behalf of so-called challengers to the system. Indeed, according to some theorists many are "too poor to protest" (McAdam 1982:23). They therefore need external help in order to be able to protest. External involvement from elites is thus seen as positive. Elites will however often have different goals than the movement. This is one of the central lessons and criticisms of Piven and Cloward (1977). The resources that the movements receive place them in a dependency relationship towards the elites. The movements will often have to become less radical in order for the elite to continue the funding. This on the other hand faces the movements with the problem of co-optation, in which they become totally dominated by the elite. In such cases they enter the domain of institutionalized politics where they lose. This will often also delegitimize the whole movement. RM-theorists also underestimate the power of the masses. The social movements can in fact contain considerable indigenous resources that make it possible for them to mobilize without explicit support from elites. McAdam (2003: 290) also criticizes the approach for not considering the fact that mobilizing structures are contested sites, which often will *keep* individuals from engaging in collective action. This comes from exclusively focusing on cases where SMOs etc. have facilitated this, and rarely including failed attempts.

2.4 Structure of Political Opportunities

This current is an effort to increasingly put the social movement in a broader political context and understand the interactions between state and social movement. A central issue is to understand what parts of the broader political context influence mobilization, aspects of the tactical repertoire and the outcome of movements. One could say that the first theoretical current, classical studies, focuses on the micro-level, meaning individuals and what makes them protest. The second broad approach, RM-theory, evolves on the meso-level, involving social movement organizations. The last approach, Political Opportunity Structure, on the other hand concentrates on the interactions between the meso- and the macro-level, which in this case are the social movements and the broader political context. Whereas much of RM-theory focuses on a purely economical view of rational action, this vein centres on rational interaction, in which actors have to anticipate the decisions of others in order to "calculate" their chances for success (Cohen and Arato 1992:521).

One of the first to theorize the relationship between the state and social movements was the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville (Tarrow 2010). As he undertook his voyage through America he found that the weak state did not interfere in the meddling of social movements and voluntary associations of civil society. Indeed, the state offered many different channels of access and influence, which gave incentives to participate in a moderate and conventional way. De Tocqueville contrasted this with what he saw as the oppressive and "aggrandized" French state which had suffocated the French nobility and made it a "parasite on society". Because there were no intermediate bodies that could act as a buffer between state and civil society, the French became individualistic, acting on egoistic and narrow interests, with no greater good as a goal. This would result in sporadic but violent mobilization, which would culminate in the French Revolution. The conclusion was therefore that a strong state would strangle participation, and whenever there was actual collective action it would be violent and bloody (Tocqueville 1956). Although criticized for not paying close enough attention to details within the cases, this was still the first attempt to relate state structure and movements together, and is as such an early inspiration to much of the subsequent theories on political opportunities.

The first one to conceptualize specifically a set of political opportunity structures in relation with protest was Eisenger (1973). He used the political context in order to explain the level of

rioting in different US-states. Eisenger focused on the "openness" of the state, meaning to which degree they were open to dissent. This was operationalized as whether there were black people in the local government and whether the local government adhered to the federal governments' rehabilitation of living spaces. The most unfavourable environment for protest is either being very open: then the dissent is internalized into the city government, or being very closed, which means that the authorities would repress any dissent. This implies a curvilinear relationship. The structure conceptualized by Eisenger (1973), which focuses on the institutional and political context, has been reproduced numerous times (Jenkins 2003 et al.; Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi 1995 et al.; McAdam 1982; Nam 2007).

In the many studies using the concept opportunity structure, the understanding of what it is and the variables included in the analysis vary a lot. McAdam (1982) who included opportunity structure as one of three parts of his Political Process Theory, has no clear definition of what it is. It seems like any external change that facilitates mobilization is part of the structure (McAdam 1982:40-42). Kitschelt (1986) on the other hand distinguishes between input and output structures. Input relates to the access to decision-making. There are, according to the author, four factors deciding the input structure. 1). The number of parties (the more the better access); 2). The power of the legislative (the higher the more access since it makes the MPs more accountable); 3). Interest aggregation (pluralist leads to more access); 4). Policy alliances (the easier they are to make the higher access). The more access-points the easier it will be for movements to influence and therefore the more incentives they will have to participate. The output structures, which relates more to the outcome will be discussed below.

Another empirical study was undertaken by Kriesi et al (1995). They looked at Switzerland, Germany, France and Netherlands in order to asses the relationship between the broader political context and social movements. Even though their interest was predominantly New Social Movements, they included movements and protest actions originating from other conflicts such as labour. Their definition of POS refers to all "signals to social and political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements" (Kriesi et al. 1995: xiii). The conceptualization of political opportunities includes more dynamic elements than Kitschelt's (1986). Among the factors are the prevailing *informal* strategies that states employ in responses to movements and the alliance structures with the configuration of power on the left and whether the left is in government or not

(Kriesi et al. 1995: xiv). As these authors and others (McAdam et al. 1996) have argued such a distinction between the static and the dynamic aspects of POS is fruitful. This is first of all important because the two types of POS have different consequences and it will be easier to distinguish between the two if one keeps them analytically distinct. Another, methodological issue, relates to the way in which one would assess each of these two parts. In cross-national studies one can better assess the static components of the POS. Kitschelt (1986) is one such example. Within-country studies are more suited for dynamic components that change within a short span of time (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996:1633). McAdam (1982) incarnates this second type of study. Within country studies in Federal states can however be used on static elements as these have a tendency to vary between regions (Jenkins et al. 2003).

It is important to remember that political opportunities may not mobilize equally the whole population (McAdam et al. 2001:4). One example is the civil rights movement in the US. Changing opportunities, such as the arrival of a Democratic president, presented good opportunities for the mobilizing of black minorities, but not at all for other groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (McAdam 1982). Another example is the selective opportunities offered to various groups (squatters and regionalist claimers) by the different degrees of decentralization in several Western European countries (Wisler and Giugni 1996). A change in the political context understood as an opportunity for one group may in fact be considered as a threat by another challenger group.

The political opportunity approach has helped our understanding of social movements in many ways. Most importantly it has linked the existence of social movements with aspects of the state and that this may vary with dynamic and static elements of the political context (McAdam 1982; Amenta et al 2002) It has also created some interest for other contexts than the American one (especially among European scholars who have adopted the political opportunity approach most frequently), although the main focus remains on the American one (Uba 2007). Finally it has helped explaining and making sense of cross-national differences in levels of mobilization, forms of mobilization and government strategies in response to mobilization (Della Porta and Diani 2006: 196). As such this is has proved to be a very fruitful concept for the development of social movement research.

Political opportunities have also received much well-deserved criticism. Meyer (1996) for example criticizes much of the literature of not being well defined. Indeed, too often there is

no clear definition of what an opportunity is. By including too many aspects into the theory, we are certainly able to explain more of the variance in protest actions, however, we lose precision in what opportunities really are, and we might end up by explaining very little (Della Porta and Diani 2006). Indeed, as Meyer and Gamson (1996:275) famously coined it:

The concept of political opportunity structure is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up virtually every aspect of the social movement environment. (...) It threatens to become an all-encompassing fudge factor for all the conditions and circumstances that form the context for collective action. Used to explain so much, it may ultimately explain nothing at all.

One cannot help but think about the warnings issued by Sartori (1970) regarding conceptual stretching. By including too many aspects in the concept it loses its accuracy. By wanting to explain more with the theory we may end up with a tautological theory that cannot be proven wrong, or is just simplistic. There is little consensus on what the main aspects of Political Opportunity Structure are. Several hypotheses are contradictory. As Meyer (2004:133) discusses, certain authors (McAdam 1982) argue that expanding opportunities account for mobilization whereas others (Meyer 1993) contend that it is precisely the contraction of opportunities that leads movements to take to the streets. A linked problem is the fact that by including different kinds of aspects in the concept of POS one may end up with situations in which a theory may be refuted or strengthened by the same kind of evidence. Meyer (2004) uses the example of grievances. Finding that grievances have had an impact on the mobilization of movements can either strengthen or weaken the theory depending on whether it has been conceptualized as part of the Opportunity Structure or not. As Meyer (2004:135) puts it "opportunity variables are often not disproved, refined, or replaced, but simply added". There is thus little knowledge accumulation in the literature regarding political opportunities, and a clear lack of parsimoniousness in the construction of theories (Nam 2007: 114).

Another criticism of the POS is that the interaction between big overarching structures and protestors is poorly understood. What mechanisms mediate between the institutional framework and protestors? How can institutions influence protestors? This has lead authors such as McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow (2001) to call for an increased focus on the mechanisms linking structure to protest. Some authors have claimed that movements need not perceive opportunities as such. They constantly try to mobilize their supporters and succeed when

opportunities are favourable (McAdam et al. 1996; Meyer 2004). They are naturally optimistic and always believe that they might succeed. Others have applied a rational choice approach, which means that movements have to perceive these opportunities and try to mobilize when changes to them occur (Tarrow 1998). This gives a cynical view of activities. A more nuanced view is perhaps that within any movement some committed activists will always try to mobilize, whereas others are waiting for cues and signals from authorities before they strategically take action (Meyer 2004:139). One mechanism that may help make sense of political opportunities is framing processes, which is to "assign meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (Benford and Snow 1988). A framing process is therefore simply the act of creating meaning to the actions of a movement (Snow et al. 1986:464). If movement actors define a change in the political structure as an opportunity they will likely mobilize. If they on the other hand do not perceive any change or that the change does not present an opportunity for them they will maybe not mobilize. In some cases the framing processes can become a self-fulfilling prophecy (Benford and Snow 2000:632).

There seems thus to be a progression towards a recognition of the political context in the research of social movements. This has proven to be essential in order to assess the political outcome and policy influence of social movements. I turn now to a more thorough discussion of the literature on what leads to different outcomes.

2.5 Studying outcomes

After this brief presentation of the different schools of collective action theory I now turn to a deeper discussion on what leads to different outcomes. Although this has not been as thoroughly researched as the sources of mobilization there is a substantial amount of literature on the subject (Amenta et al. 2010).

2.5.1 What is success?

I will first discuss different ways of conceptualizing success, defeat and more generally outcome. This is a very important task and is one all studies of movement outcomes need to

consider. Kriesi et al. (1995:207-208) argues that the lack of research that had been conducted on the topic was mainly due to two methodological difficulties. The first one concerned the definition of success or outcome. It is indeed difficult and many authors have called for studying outcomes, impacts or consequences instead of success (Andrews 2001; Calvo 2007; Linders 2004). This is because success relates to the goals of a movement, and such goals may change over the course of the movement. Also, one should also admit that movements may spur unexpected and even contradictory consequences (Calvo 2007: 297). However, most authors end up focusing on success, even the ones claiming to look at consequences (Calvo 2007). Furthermore, it is the success of movements and their stated goals that is the most interesting outcome for both policy-makers and movement participants. I therefore choose to focus on success[3], while being aware that there may be unintended consequences and that I need to pay close attention to the goals of the movement. For each case I therefore discuss the most prominent goals and demands of the movement. The second obstacle relates to the problem of causality and whether one can asses that the movement had a substantial independent impact on the outcome. This will be treated further in the method chapter and in the analytical chapter. I will now discuss more thoroughly how to define different outcomes.

One can first distinguish between *internal* and *external* impacts. The internal concern the identities of the participants or the organization of the movement. This will not be considered further in this thesis as I intend to focus on external political consequences. A famous starting point for external impacts is Gamson's (1975) dual conceptualization of success. The first relates to the degree to which the challenging group in question is accepted as representing a legitimate set of interests. The second concerns the introduction of new advantages or benefits to constituents and members. Kitschelt (1986) calls these aspects *procedural* and *substantive* impacts. This approach has been further developed, and some see the introduction of new benefits as contingent on an already existing acceptance by the elites (Cress and Snow 2000). Later research has therefore to some extent gone away from acceptance and concentrated more on the collective benefits part. Amenta and Young (1999) distinguish between three levels of benefits from the state. The lowest, and weakest form of benefit are short term and minor benefits, such as a one time increase in spending on a particular social issue. Such benefits have often been criticized for being insubstantial and merely to show the public that

[3] However, I will interchangeably use success and favourable outcome for linguistic reasons

something is being done (Amenta and Caren 2004:466; Piven and Cloward 1977). The highest level is a sort of meta-benefit, meaning that movements can gain a say over future benefits and increase these. Rebuking this kind of success would be very difficult. Such an example would be the right to vote. The most common level of benefit is the middle level, which means that the benefits are institutionalized and recurring and often more substantial than a low benefit. It can however be changed more easily than a high level of success (Amenta and Young 1999). One can further distinguish between *proactive* and *reactive* impacts. Proactive impacts mean that a movement is actively engaged in the introduction of new advantages. Reactive impacts on the other hand concern preventing the implementation of new disadvantages (Kriesi et al. 1995:210). One can say that movements with proactive claims seek decision-making power, whereas reactive movements take up the role of veto-player (Kriesi 1995). Such movements have rarely been studied but for a few exceptions (Uba 2007).

One question remains however. If a movement's success is linked to the initial goals, how does one establish what these goals are? Should it be the internal subjective feelings of the rank and file, or an objective measurement by outside experts of the goals? A middle-way exists by looking at "goals publicly presented in speech or writing to nonmovement actors such as movement targets, the media or bystander publics" (Burstein et al. 1995:282). The authors note that this is what most researchers use. Furthermore it is fairly easy to identify since such statements tend to be reproduced in the media. It is possible that official statements contradict each other, especially in this case where there is no single SMO, but a plethora of SMOs working together. It will therefore be important to locate such dissonance and include it in the analysis of whether a movement obtains a favourable outcome. One must however remember that goals and demands can be vague and not very concrete. It can therefore be difficult to establish at which point a movement has obtained the demands they were seeking.

It is important to keep in mind that stopping new disadvantages may only be temporary. Indeed, it may be more appropriate to talk about postponing the introduction of new disadvantages instead of stopping it all together (Uba 2007). This could be linked to the collective benefits approach, since this explicitly calls benefits that can be withdrawn in the future middle successes, whereas benefits that cannot be withdrawn, or only with much difficulty (such as by changing the constitution) would be high successes (Amenta and Young 1999). Adapting this approach to a re-active movement means that if a movement can

establish rules which prevent new disadvantages from appearing one can speak of a high level of success. If a withdrawal of a law happens without further consequences it can only be considered a mid-level success.

For my thesis I will focus on such re-active movements. I will utilize the framework on collective benefits as a way to nuance successes. Some successes may be greater than others and some parts of the actors in a movement may obtain more substantial successes than others. This is also a point to remember: the goals and objectives of different parts and members of the movement may be different. Any given movement may contain certain pro-active or re-active elements.

In my thesis I define a movement a success "if the government, as a result of the mobilization, decides to withdraw the policy that was contested in the beginning". I will also keep track of various other measures that can be said to be successful, meaning subventions and contributions. I classify these last measures as low or minor successes. Stopping a policy proposal is a middle success. A high success is relatively unlikely, but it would entail a redefinition of redistribution mechanisms or similar measures. This high success would actually include pro-active measures. Following the suggestions of Giugni et al. (1999) I will also focus on movements that failed. Most research has focused on movements that succeeded. Comparing similar movements, some of which failed and some of which succeeded will therefore be a substantial contribution to the literature in this area. Thus a definition of failure is also needed. A movement can be considered a failure when they fail to prevent a policy from being put in place. In other words if the opposed policy is implemented, despite the mobilization, the movement is a failure.

2.5.2 Explaining social movement outcomes

I will here present different factors that the literature has identified as more or less conducive to different social movement impacts. I start by referring to the well-know debate regarding whether internal or external variables best explain social movements outcome, which conditions the degree to which one sees social movement impacts as direct or indirect (Giugni et al. 1999; Giugni 2004). I then present the concept of protest avoidance strategy, which includes a new dynamic element in the equation, namely the action and strategy of the

government put in place in order to avoid protest and being influenced by social movements Lastly I discuss some important implications of the political mediation point of view, namely that one should focus on both movement related variables and the political context together.

2.5.2.1 Different causes for mobilization and outcome

Meyer (2004) cautions students of social movement outcomes to equate opportunities for mobilization with opportunities for success. Indeed, different dependent variables are concerned and the opportunities should therefore be kept apart. In fact, there seems to be evidence that a context that may spur mobilization may be exactly the context where the hopes for a positive outcome are the slimmest (Meyer 2004:137-138). This seems to be true when it comes to the strength of the executive. The weaker the executive the more access points, however the power to implement the demands diminishes, and therefore also the chances of getting policy demands through (Della Porta and Diani 2006:205-206). These issues have also been stressed by other authors such as Cornwall et al (2007), Meyer and Minkoff (2004) and Calvo (2007).

2.5.2.2 Internal variables and direct impact

I will in this part focus on the direct relationship between social movements and their outcomes. First I will focus on the debate regarding the efficiency of disrupting tactics and identify two important mechanisms. Secondly, I discuss another important and somewhat related debate regarding the degree of bureaucratization of an SMO. In addition I include considerations regarding the tactical repertoire and characteristics of a movement, namely whether they are big and thus send strong signals of discontent or employ a varied and novel repertoire.

Disruption in opposition to moderation

Among classical theorists there was little focus on movement outcomes, and when it was mentioned, outcomes were mostly seen as directly correlated with the degree of mobilization itself (Kriesi et al. 1995: 208). One of the first to explicitly focus on the outcomes of social movements was Gamson (1975). He contended that the more disruptive a movement is the more likely it is to succeed. This was a heavy attack on the pluralist model which argued that

moderation was more conducive to success in the American system. His work was followed up by others who came to quite similar conclusions such as Steedly and Foley (1979). Shorter and Tilly (1974), writing exclusively about strikes, found a positive relationship between the use of violence and the degree to which they obtain positive results. Piven and Cloward (1977) also found that disruption makes movements more likely to succeed. What is the theoretical argument for why disruption should increase the likelihood of success? According to Piven and Cloward (1977) the poor (or others who are not part of the elite) have very little influence through the normal means of influence articulation such as the electoral channel or interest groups. Their only chance of getting their voice heard is through disrupting elites and threatening their privileges. By orchestrating dramatic, disruptive and threatening events, movements force authorities to respond (with repression or concessions) to their demands, by taking them off guard (Andrews 2001: 74). More precisely, through blocking the economy or causing much disruption the poor give "negative inducements" (Lipsky 1968; McAdam 1982) to the elites. These negative inducements, understood as "the withdrawal of a crucial contribution on which others depend" (Piven and Cloward 1977:24), can be threatening to the state, politicians and ultimately their re-election. The marginalised, who have few political resources, must use other means, such as protest. Should the movement become more moderate it will lose this power and will less likely be heard. If social movements try more conventional ways of influencing they will be co-opted into the system, just with less resources than everyone else and thus less power (Piven and Cloward 1977). Disruption will not always succeed, the answer from authorities can be repression, but without disruption obtaining a favourable outcome is impossible.

Being too violent, however, can have detrimental consequences for a movement. First of all, a movement risks being heavily repressed by state authorities. Indeed, as Tarrow (1998) argues, violence happens in an interaction between state and movement, and this interaction can spiral out of control. Should this happen, less radical demonstrators may choose not to descend in the streets because they view it as too dangerous to participate. Thus, the movement will not be able to provide sustained pressure on the authorities. Secondly, violent protest may frighten potential allies among the elite. These elites may have wanted to support the movement, but if the protest actions are accompanied with too much violence it may be too costly, electoral wise, to support it. According to Mansbridge (1986) this was the case for the Equal Rights Amendments movement in the US where radical proponents alienated "middle of the road" legislators and voters (Soule and Olzak 2004). Thus social movements seem to be balancing

on a knife's edge between disrupting just enough to create problems for the elite and make them see the underlying problems, and degenerating into too much violence and thereby alienating moderates, allies within the elite and public opinion.

In more or less stark opposition to the concept of threat and disruption is that of moderation. Schumaker (1975) for example believes that militancy is not good and that moderation is the way for protest groups to achieve their goals. Some studies in the literature on disruption within urban riots seem to find no or negative influence of disruption on riot outcomes (see McAdam and Su 2002 for a theoretical overview). Writing about movements for the homeless in various American cities Snow and Cress (2000) conclude that the influence of disruption is dependent on the political context. In this case the relevant factor was whether there had been prior signs of support for the movement. If yes, then non-disruptive means would be more efficient. If no, disruption through sit-ins and demonstrations would be most efficient.

Some of the confusion as to the importance of disruption may be due to sloppy definitions of what disruption is. Disruption has been defined both as extreme violence and "some property damage or economic loss" (Uba 2007:21). I find a definition that equates disruption with violence too restrictive. Disruption may be much more, especially since the movements of this thesis are very big and can therefore incur considerable economic sanctions on a government. Because of their big size they regularly infringe on the mobility of others. I therefore include this within my definition of disruption. Disruption is therefore defined as actions by movements that "cause property damage, infringe social mobility for others or entail economic loss".

Bureaucratization

Gamson (1975) argues that having a bureaucratic organization is most conducive to success. It will facilitate coordinating the movement and obtaining valuable resources that will help sustain the movement and its disruptive potential. Similarly, following the Resource Mobilization paradigm, McCharty and Zald (1977) argue that such an organization is imperial if a social movement can have any hope of achieving success as it is the only way to aggregate the needed resources in order to lay sustained claims on authorities. This is corroborated by Martin (2007; 2008) when looking at labour unions in the United States. Moreover, SMOs that are united internally and externally with other SMOs should be more

likely to succeed (Beamish and Luebbers 2009; Dixon 2010; Gamson 1975). Factionalizations may for example occur due to SMOs competing for adherents or funding (Rucht 2004: 209). This is shown by Tarrow (1993) when accounting for the educational reform following the events of May 1968. In fact there was a strong factionalization among teachers and students. This meant that the movement was unable to present a coherent alternative that could have inspired a more substantial reform. The result was a reform that was slowly deradicalized and made less consequential.

The centrality of organizations has however been challenged by numerous scholars. Goldstone (1980) for example argues that organization seems to have little to do with success. Piven and Cloward (1977) present the strongest criticism of Gamson (1975) when they claim that bureaucratization is exactly what makes social movements lose. Inspired by Michels (1962) famous study of oligarchy within political parties, Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that it is by bureaucratizing, making the movement more like an interest group and entering the normal arena of electoral politics that a social movement will fail. As bureaucratization continues the SMO will gradually become more conservative employing more conventional and regular tactics. Since disruption is the prime resource of social movements, anything that keeps them from exploiting this will hurt the movement. This is the central difference with Gamson (1975). They all believe disruption to be favourable for movement outcomes, but whereas Gamson (1975) believes bureaucratization helps the disruptive potential of a movement, Piven and Cloward (1977) claim the exact opposite. In fact, when movements become bureaucratized they tend to favour the survival of the organization rather than the implementation of the movements' goals (Della Porta and Diani 2006; Piven and Cloward 1977). This quest for survival will lead to a search for external resources, which translates into a fear of co-optation as expressed by for instance McAdam (1982). He argues that elite-involvement in the movement is likely to make it dependent on external resources. This will either lead them to be co-opted by the elite or simply dissolved due to the lack of resources.

Characteristics of the movement and their tactical repertoire

Another variable that is within the hands of the movement is its tactical repertoire, meaning the ways in which it tries to influence the adversaries in order to gain acceptance for its demands and goals. I will focus on four such characteristics: *novelty, disruption, variety,* and *size* (Taylor and Van Dyke 2004:279). I will not discuss the second characteristic, *disruption*

here as it has already been discussed at length above. When it comes to *novelty*, success is more likely when innovative tactics are involved. This can surprise and catch the authorities off guard. It will also possibly attract more media attention to the cause of the protestors. This is further enhanced by the fact that most movements stick to a fixed set of repertoires, that only slowly evolves (Tilly 1986, 2004). In France this could be seen during the 18th and 19th century. As decisions regarding the lives of ordinary people were increasingly taken at the national level the traditional repertoire including such actions as seizures of grain, charivara etc., became ineffective and gave way to the new repertoire which is composed of demonstrations, strikes, occupations etc. (Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1986). This repertoire proved to be more efficient, but as it was used more and more often it too lost its novelty. Shorter and Tilly (1974) for example argue that strikes during the 1830s were much more successful than during the 1960s. This trend continued and was more apparent during the 80s and 90s according to Groux and Pernot (2008). All this corroborate the central insights provided by other scholars such as Tarrow (1998) as to the importance of using innovative and "surprising" tactics to obtain concessions from the authorities. *Variety* regards the use of various tactics. This has proven to be significant on numerous occasions, because it creates multiple ways of influencing which makes it harder for the authorities to repress them effectively (Morris 1993).

The *size* of the movement also plays an important role. In fact, the more people participating the stronger the public display of numerical strength. The gathering of many people increases media attention and also contributes to the disruptive power of a protest by overwhelming the law enforcement and disturbing local everyday life. Morris, when researching the origins of the success of the 1963 civil rights movement in Birmingham found that the size of the movement most certainly played a role, partly because it increased disruption and overcrowded prisons (1993). Moreover, the signalling mechanism identified by certain scholars such as Lohmann (1993) Uba (2005) and McAdam and Su (2002) is linked to the size of protests. Large protests will send signals to politicians seeking re-election that they should change policy in order to be more in line with their voters. Such protests will inform politicians regarding the salience of the issue and the negative preferences of the public. Uba (2005) finds that the signalling mechanism (persuasiveness) is less important than threatening. McAdam and Su (2002) on the other are less conclusive. They contend that both being threatening and persuasive at the same time is the most efficient. It is important to remember, however, that a large demonstration may be largely peaceful, sending strong signals of

discontent, while at the same time being disruptive and thereby threatening the interests of the state. The signalling mechanism resembles some of Burstein's (1999) mechanisms, which will be discussed further below.

Similar for all these characteristics is that they call attention from the decision-makers and give new information as to their re-election, which in previous literature has been found to be a very important mechanism for obtaining favourable outcomes (Burstein and Linton 2002).

2.5.2.3 External variables and an indirect relationship

Other studies stress the importance of the political environment and context (Amenta et al. 2010; Giugni et al. 1999). Such studies include McAdam (1982), Kitschelt (1986), Kriesi et al. (1995), Tarrow (1991, 1998), Meyer (2004), Burstein (1998; 1999), Burstein and Linton (2002) and Cornwall et al. (2007). These and others have argued that the degree to which a movement will have a favourable impact (or an impact at all) is largely dependent on the political context. A focus on external variables implies a more indirect causal effect in which the movement are at the mercy of a favourable context (Giugni 2004). I will here first discuss the role played by political institutions, including a short discussion of the French political system. I then focus on political allies. In the end I will elaborate on the place of public opinion within in social movement research.

State structure

Some of the earlier studies (Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi et al. 1995) focused on the degree of openness and the strength of the state in accounting for the chances for success. A more open state will be more easily influenced, while a strong state will be able to implement policies to a much greater extent than a weak state (Kitschelt 1986:67-70). This is because such a state has the administrative and legislative power to overrule strong legislative minorities or interest groups that try to hinder legislation. As an example of an open and weak state Kitschelt (1986:66) uses the US where interest groups have much influence, a minority can obstruct the senate through filibusting and every bill has to go through both chambers, which are often held by different parties. It is also heavily decentralized. France is the example of a closed strong state. The executive clearly dominates the legislative and can push through laws. The bureaucracy is also seen as very effective in implementing policies. Furthermore, it

is a strongly centralized[4] state with few ways of influencing decisions other than during elections. These very different constitutional arrangements make for dramatically different realities and contexts for social movements. For substantive changes, relating to new advantages, the best environment would be an open but strong state, and secondly a closed and strong state. The most important is thus a system in which the state is powerful enough to enforce its laws (Kitschelt 1986). Kriesi et al. (1995) develop on the ideas of Kitschelt (1986). They conclude for example by saying that the impact of gains obtained by a social movement will be higher in a strong state, however, if it is closed such as in France it will be almost impossible to obtain. These views have been criticised for forgetting that movement influence vary over time and furthermore that the state may not have the equal bureaucratic implementation power on different issues (Amenta et al. 2010:198).

The French political system

Although the institutional arrangements will vary to a very small extent between the cases I will here present more thoroughly the French system and how a law is voted as this will prove to be vital in order to understand aspects of interactions between state and society. This has also been identified as central in understanding different outcomes (Andrews 2001: 73).

France is often described as a semi-presidential regime, meaning a system in which there is both an elected president and a prime minister dependent on the parliament. The president is widely regarded as more powerful than the prime minister. However, this is not due to his legal powers, but more linked to the fact that he is elected by popular vote, enjoying a high legitimacy due to the two-round ballot[5], and that he appoints the prime minister. Indeed, the president has weak constitutional powers. In fact, Roper (2002) classifies France as number 4 out of 10 premier-presidential regimes in Europe when it comes to institutional powers. For example, it is the prime minister that fires his cabinet ministers and not the president. Still, the de facto power rests within the hands of the president. When president and prime minister are from different parties a situation called cohabitation occurs. This means that the power

[4] This conception of France has however recently been challenged as the country since 1982 has gone through a strong regionalization process. Regions gained in importance and their existence was secured in the constitution. Furthermore, the competences of regions were expanded and their members were elected directly by the people. Nevertheless, the relationship between region, department and municipality remains unclear, and the state retains all legislative power Maud Bazoche, *Département Ou Région? Les Réformes Territoriales De Fénelon À Jacques Attali* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).. France is thus still a closed and strong state, albeit less than before.
[5] This implies that the president will always be elected by a "majority", thereby giving him an artificially high numerical legitimacy.

arrangement to a large degree tilts back to that of the constitution, and the president retains control over foreign policy whereas the prime minister is preoccupied with domestic affairs. This situation has occurred three times, 1986-1988, 1993-1995 and 1997-2002. A recent change to the presidential tenure, which aligns it with that of the assembly, has made cohabitation much more unlikely (Berntzen 2008).

The prime lesson here is that the executive, be it the president or the prime minister, keeps power over the legislative which in many cases will not or can not oppose the executive. A well-known way of curtailing the powers of parliament is by proposing a package of laws, on which no amendments can be made, except for the ones accepted by the government. This is called blocked vote or unique vote and can be found in article 44.3 of the constitution (Assemblée Nationale 2011). Another power is the use of article 49.3 of the constitution which allows the government to push a law through parliament without a vote. The only way to prevent such a law from being adopted is to place a motion of no confidence within the 24 hours after the use of the article (Suleiman 1994). This shortens the debate and forces hesitating deputies of the majority to vote with the government (Balme 1998). Recent constitutional changes made it useable only in financial and social security issues and once every year (session) it can be used on any law proposal (Assemblée Nationale 2011). It still, however, remains a considerable power for the French government. The legislative body, which is composed of the Senate and the "Assemblée Nationale" (National Assembly), remains fairly weak, especially when prime minister and president belong to the same party. However, since 1974, 60 deputies or senators can appeal to the Constitutional Council which will rule whether a new law is contrary to the constitution. If a law or part of a law is found to have been in contradiction with the constitution it cannot be promulgated without changing or dropping the contested aspects (Stone 1989). This is one of parliaments few powers and is widely used by the opposition. Nevertheless power resides firmly within the executive.

Allies

Others have focused on the presence of allies (Lipsky 1968; Tarrow 1998). Having allies seems crucial for any social movement to achieve success. These allies can be in civil society, government, opposition, political parties etc. When it comes to the outcome what is mostly needed is the ability to act. Therefore, having allies among decision-makers is generally viewed as positive for the outcome. This will increase the chances for success as it is a way of

introducing claims on the governmental agenda and legitimizing the movement. Indeed, allies will carry into the institutional arena the issues that are being addressed by social movements in the public space (Giugni 2004: 120; Giugni 2007: 55). As such the more allies a movement has among decision-makers the better their chances for success may be. Political parties, being dependent on support in order to win elections, are often considered as the most important and probable allies of movements. While in opposition they will often, in their eagerness to win elections, align themselves with movements. However, this may change while in government as they may want to ensure re-election by appealing to its core-constituents' main economic interests which may not always be in the interest of social movements (Della Porta and Diani 2006: 215; Kriesi 1995: 182). Although the opposition and government do not alternate among the cases, and therefore this is not something I will be able to test, two important insights are still useful. First, governments may not want concede to social movement demands because it would weaken them among their prime constituents. The second, and related insight, concerns the role of elections. In fact, electoral competition will often condition the position of potential allies towards claims from social movements. According to Piven and Cloward (1977) it is only when it is deemed reasonable for political parties, electorally speaking, to support social movements that these will have any chance of obtaining a favourable outcome. Thus political instability favours social movements and their success by inducing potential allies to support these movements. The importance of elections will be further developed below.

Public Opinion

To understand fully the impact of social movements one also has to include public opinion. Giugni (2004) for example argues that for a social movement to have any chance of major success it needs to have public opinion on its side. When authorities feel that an issue is important and salient to the public, they will be responsive (Giugni 2004:192). He finds the most promising results when public opinion is included with the effect of political alliances. Whalstrøm and Peterson (2006) also found that public opinion proved influential in the Animal Rights Movement in Sweden. This is because if the government decides to go against preferences held by the majority they may risk losing a re-election. Soule and Olzak (2004: 479) note that it is especially under periods of political competition, meaning before elections, that public opinion will be followed. Similarly, Calvo (2007) argues that party leaders may have a tendency to implement reforms, satisfying claims of social movements, in order to

improve their electoral performance (298). This indicates that social movements enjoying favourable public opinion are more likely to succeed.

Some go even further and say that social movement influence is compromised by public opinion, and that there is little, if anything, left to be explained when public opinion is included (Burstein 1998; Burstein and Linton 2002). Burstein (1999) contends that movements have very little impact directly on policy, especially when facing a strong and popular majority, meaning that social movement actions matter very little when public opinion is included. There are in practice only three ways that a movement can influence policy. 1). it can change the legislators' perceptions of the preferences of the public. The more new information the movement can offer policy-makers the greater chance for success; 2). it can change the perceptions of the public themselves. The more impact the movement has on the public's preferences the more impact it will have on legislation; 3). it can change the salience of the issue for the public. By making a seemingly (to the public) unimportant issue seem more important the movement can indirectly influence policy. Social movements can have an indirect impact on policies by making politicians fear they will lose votes by not responding to the claims of the movement. It is thus through the electoral channel that the greatest threat for politicians come, and social movements are more signs of discontent than a direct threat. Uba (2009), conducting a similar meta-analysis to Burstein and Linton (2002), contradicts their findings and notes that social movements do have an impact, even when public opinion is included. She also notes that the most important may not be general public opinion but perhaps the preferences of some core part of the electorate (Uba 2009: 439).

2.5.2.4 Protest Avoidance Tactics

The last aspect I will focus on is the strategy of authorities. This has largely been ignored[6] in the literature despite the fact that it has been stressed that one should focus on the relations that a movement enjoys with other actors such as governments (Fantasia and Stepan-Norris 2004; McAdam et al. 2001). If authorities are hostile to the goals of a social movement they may try to keep the social movement from mobilizing successfully and split it. This is what Béland and Marier (2006) call "Protest Avoidance". It was originally conceived as a way to understand how politicians in a highly centralized political system could implement unpopular

[6] Except for protest policing and direct physical repression (Della Porta 2006: 197).

reforms. The authors want to bridge the protest avoidance perspective with the normal aspects of the social movement literature, and they contend that it constitutes a normal part of the political environment that needs to be considered (Béland and Marier 2006). Protest avoidance theory need not concern only pension reforms or other unpopular reforms instigated by the government. Any time a government considers a group's demands to be problematic they may engage in protest avoidance tactics. Although the theory in this thesis will be used on big social movements with reactive claims, it is an aspect that should be included in any social movement research. According to Béland and Marier (2004, 2006) protest avoidance tactics consist of at least four distinct aspects. 1). Firstly, enacting the law during a period of time when workers or students are on holiday will prevent them from mobilizing at a full potential. It will be hard to get back to the same mobilization potential afterwards. 2). The second aspect concerns the geographical location of the subject of contention. By placing it far from people the disruptive effects are lessened. 3). Bargaining with important actors in the social movement in order to factionalize them and keep them from coordinating successfully constitutes the third aspect of the theory. Krinsky and Reese (2006) also note that the authorities may engage in selective bargaining with certain parts of a movement in order to break it (626). This draws upon Gamsons' (1975) lessons which tells us that the factionalization of a movement can be very damaging. 4). The final part relates to the authorities' efforts to frame reform as inescapable in order to make protest seem futile. Used on the reform attempts of 1993, 1995 and 2003 especially the first and third aspect seemed to be the most important (Béland and Marier 2006:307-308). Since this is an understudied theme and Béland and Marier (2006) explicitly recognize that this is not an exhaustive list, I will also try to identify new aspects of the tactical repertoire of governments. As has been discussed disruption seems for some authors to be more efficient than moderate actions. Protest avoidance tactics can thus be seen as an effort by the authorities to pull the conflict from contentious politics back to routine politics in which the state has a better control of affairs (Béland and Marier 2006:299).

2.5.2.5 Political mediation approach and the joint effect

External and internal factors can be regrouped together under what is known as the Political Mediation Approach. It too focuses on external factors, but is more explicit about the interplay *between* social movement characteristics *and* external factors. Giugni (2007; 2009) calls this the joint-effect approach, which signals that rather than favouring a direct or indirect

impact of social movements one should consider the simultaneous interactions between variables which create a joint effect. The main question asked in this theory is "under what conditions are social movements likely to be influential", and not whether movements are generally successful or whether certain aspects of movements are always influential (Amenta et al. 2005:517-518). An important vein within the political mediation approach has also taken to criticize current theories of movement outcomes. In fact, the variables that are employed currently are either too abstract or too broad. For example is it rarely clear what is meant by an open or closed institutionalized political system (Amenta et al. 2002:52). This makes them very difficult to test empirically, something which has also been deplored by Meyer (2004).

The essence of the theory is that the political context, or opportunity structure, mediates the mobilization and demands of the movement. The context may be favourable, in which case mobilization does not need to be very strong in order to obtain favourable outcomes. If however the movement faces an unfavourable context it will need much mobilization and strong assertiveness in order to have a favourable impact on policy. This does not mean that favourable outcomes are impossible in a "hostile" political context, merely that social movements are more *likely* to exert an influence when the political context favours it (Soule and Olzak 2004: 482). Rather than focusing on bureaucracies, and the horizontal dispersion of power which some authors following the political mediation approach have done (Amenta et al. 2005), I use the central insight of the approach, which is that in order to understand movement outcomes one needs to take into consideration *both* the actions and characteristics of the movement itself and the political context (Soule and Olzak 2004). It is thus a combination of factors that lead to a particular outcome, and one independent variable may only be potent if interacted with another. Only by including both movement related factors and the political context can one understand the complex outcomes of social movements.

My model therefore builds on an extension of the political mediation model. It includes the actions and the characteristics of the movement in question which mobilize under the constraints of the strategy of the authorities. The characteristics include the degree of disruption, novelty, variety and size, as well as the nature of the SMOs and their degree of unity. This is mediated by the broader political context, which includes allies, public opinion and the strategies of the authorities.

3.0 A multiple case study of four movements

When choosing a method it is important to keep the research question in mind and especially regarding what it is one wants to explain. Certain methods lend themselves better to explain certain kinds of events or causal relationships, and one should therefore consider carefully which method is the most appropriate (Gerring 2004). No method is however *the* best method. Although there seems to be a stark opposition between quantitative and qualitative research, both have their virtues and pitfalls, and the choice between the two should be based on the shape and content of the research question, not on some apparent disapproval for either one (Tarrow 2010: 252).

I conduct a multiple case study of four French protest movements. In this chapter I will explain this choice by discussing my research question and the complex relationship between the independent and dependent variables. I will here show that in order to understand the complex nature of causation in these movements one has to go deep in each movement and prove that there are in fact causal links between the proposed variables. I also define the scope of the study and the entities to which generalizations can be made. I argue that this is best done through multiple case studies which will increase the explanatory power of my conclusions. This is also due to the fairly high number of variables. All these are concerns that have been voiced by various scholars in the movement literature. I will secondly discuss my data sources. The main bulk of my data is newspaper data. Other significant sources are various official reports, organizational reports and academic studies that have been conducted. Interview data and observations were not deemed necessary, although they could have shed light on the phenomena. Observations could not be made because I study phenomena that have already ceased to exist. Interviews with activists could have yielded information about the interpretations of events by the actors themselves, but were not possible within the scope of the master thesis.

3.1 The research question and my goals for the thesis

As stated before my research question is:
Why do some social movements succeed and others fail? What factors and mechanisms influence the outcome of a social movement?

My intention with this study is threefold. First, I want to understand why the specific four movements, that may appear similar, experienced the disparate outcomes they did. Second, I aim to identify general factors that contribute to outcomes of protest movements in general in France. My third goal relates to establishing and clarifying some of the relationships between the independent and dependent variable(s) in the general social movement literature. The degree of certainty of my conclusions will of course be strongest for the four specific cases. My study is a good example of a theory-confirming or theory-infirming study to use Lijphart's (1971: 691) terminology. Although he notes that such case studies are only marginally useful for the building of theories, I argue that such studies can come with important corrections and refinements to the existing theories (Gerring 2004; Yin 2009). I thus seek to discover the factors and variables that may influence a movement's chances for success. This is therefore a question of causation. The case study is particularly apt at explaining "how" and "why" questions (Yin 2009: 9). Such studies often deal with establishing causation through links between variables and outcomes (George and Bennett 2005). This is different than the logic underlying quantitative research (large-N) which according to well-known criticisms establishes broad correlations and frequencies rather than causality (Ragin 2004). The study of movements and contentious politics is very complex where many of the main variables are badly defined and the links with the outcome are not always well understood (McAdam et al. 2008; McAdam and Tarrow 2010). The problem of equifinality, meaning that any particular outcome may have several different causes (George and Bennett 2005:10), has been identified in certain studies, especially in the US regarding movements focusing on old-age pensions (Amenta et al. 2005). Making sense of this can best be done through an intense case study. Furthermore, there is evidence that some of the variables are interactions and do not develop independently of each other, making them less suitable for large-N research. The case study is an interesting method for establishing the relationships and bringing more clarity as to the exact links between the variables since the case study is especially adept at uncovering interaction effects (George and Bennett 2005: 46). I therefore see the case study as most apt to answer my research question. I now turn to discussing the case study and particular problems that I may encounter when conducting this study.

3.2 What is a case study?

Case studies have been conducted in social science ever since its inception during the 19th century. However, with the advent of new statistical methods and more sophisticated data-analysis programs quantitative cross-national analysis gained stronger ground, especially since it opened up the possibility to generalize on a wider scale (George and Bennett 2005:3-4). The case study in fact seemed out of favour among most students of political science. As Gerring (2004:341) notes the case study as a method has been heavily criticized and many have promoted the view that case studies are in some way inferior to experimental and statistical research. Still, a large number of case studies and other qualitative research are still published, and contributes strongly to our understanding of the world (George and Bennett 2005; Gerring 2004; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003). This has called for a renewed interest in the use of this method. With this in mind it is suitable to ask what exactly constitutes a case study. According to Gerring (2004:341) a case study is an "in-depth study of a single unit (a relatively bounded phenomenon) where the scholar's aim is to elucidate features of a larger class of similar phenomena". With unit is meant phenomenon such as revolution, nation-state, protest movement etc. This definition has the merit that it does not include any bias towards qualitative or quantitative methods (researchers using the case study approach can and do utilize quantitative methods). Furthermore it clearly links the unit to a larger group of phenomenon to which inferences in various degrees should be made. Gerring (2004:342) presents a typology of three different types of case studies based on how co-variation is observed: single unit over time; within-unit at one point in time; or within-unit over time. My study of French protest actions will be of the latter type as I have several different movements that will be compared over a certain period of time. George and Bennett (2005) offer a similar understanding of what a case is. A case for them is simply an instance of a class of events (George and Bennett 2005:17). A case study is therefore a study of such instances. This definition also refers to a broader category. However, it has the merit that it does not confuse case with unit, which in my opinion is apparent in Gerring (2004). This opens up the possibility of having multiple cases (instances of a class of events).

Following the definition of George and Bennett (2005) one can argue that I conduct a comparative case study. Since there are four movements in my study it constitutes what is often called a multiple case study. According to Yin (2009: 53) the multiple case study is simply a different form of case study. Because there are more cases the conclusions that one

draws are more robust than when using just one case (Johnson et al. 2008: 152). Yin (2009: 56-57) explains that behind the multiple case study lies a replication logic which implies that every case is treated as an individual case study and later, a cross-case study comparison is conducted where the results of each case are compared. This is exactly what I intend to do. When choosing cases on the "two extremes" of the dependent variable (yes / no, high / low, success / failure) one has a "two-tail" study. These are more complicated than other studies since for the replication logic to be effective one needs two cases in each category. I heed his call and therefore include two cases for each "extreme", namely "success" and "failure". I include "failure" because research has often only concerned successes (Giugni 1999).

This selection of cases corresponds to what Gerring (2008: 652) defines as a diverse case study, involving cases selected because of their variation on some kind of variable. In this case the variation in the dependent variable, namely the outcome of the movements, was the prime tool for selection. This clearly breaks with the advice given by certain scholars not to choose on the dependent variable. However, in my thesis this is a conscious choice so as to *assure* that there is variation in the dependent variable. Choosing on the dependent variable first becomes a problem when "there is no variation to be explained". This vision has also been criticized by qualitative, case-oriented scholars such as Ragin (2004) as being irrelevant when applied to case studies.

In addition to this there are certain other caveats that have been proposed by mainly quantitative scholars. Much of the critique towards case studies comes from the fact that one supposedly focuses on a very limited amount of information, taken from only one or a few cases (George and Bennett 2005:22-33). This may lead to a lack of representativeness. The case may not be representative of other cases and the conclusions drawn from the former may not be transferable to the latter. Quantitative, large-N studies are therefore superior because generalizations can more easily be made. This can be traced back to proponents such as Przeworski and Teune (1970:21-22) who favour parsimony and generality over accuracy. Making less accurate theories that can more easily be transferred to many contexts is therefore the goal. However, as many have pointed out, this is not the goal of most qualitative research. In fact, providing explanations for a defined set of outcomes is more often the main aim of case studies. King, Keohane et al. (1994) furthermore state that while parsimony might be desirable, the trade off is less clear than what Przeworski and Teune (1970) seem to think. Indeed, theories should be as complex and accurate as the evidence suggest. Explaining and

identifying the links between cause and effect is just as important as making wide-spread generalizations (Elster 1998; Ragin 2004). Yin (2009: 15) also argues that analytical generalizations to general theory are possible with case study evidence, which should not be confounded with statistical generalizations to populations and universes. It is important to keep these considerations in mind when discussing the implication of ones findings. One should therefore draw limited generalizations, while at the same time being careful not to generalize outside the population of cases and claim that one is making generalizations applicable to a wide array of cases (George and Bennett 2005).

I now turn to delimitating the scope of the case study and what really the case in this study is.

3.3 What is the case in this study?

The class of events is social movements following the definition given in the first chapter, and the subtype of this class of events is major reactive social movements. Defining this in a good way is imperative for further research (George and Bennett 2005:69). Reactive means that the movements in question mobilize in reaction to reforms initiated by the government. By major I mean national movements that involve many people over a certain period of time[7]. All the cases should be instances of the same class of events, meaning that there should be no doubt that we are comparing the same type of events. This will to a large extent depend on the research objective. If one seeks to identify what and in which way protest movements achieve success, it does not make sense to put in the same category instances as different as protest movements and interest groups. However, if the research objective was to understand how citizens can influence politicians between elections, such a classification might be warranted. Why do I specify major reactive social movements as a subcategory? This is partly out of empirical and practical concerns. It limits the universe to a more manageable amount of cases (according to Fillieule (1997, 2003) the number of demonstrations in France totals up to more than 10 000 per year and is increasing. Choosing between these would be very hard). The selected cases are also the biggest events and therefore the events for which the best data material exists. Furthermore, these are the protest events that have marked France the most

[7] I avoid indicating a precise amount of people since this would be highly arbitrary as there is no theoretical grounds for specifying a specific amount. There are in addition many ways of participating in a movement (strikes, demonstrations, occupations), which may not be correlated and choosing one measure over the other may lead to different movements being captured by the definition. Furthermore, there are big discrepancies when it comes to the numbers provided by different actors such as the state or the unions.

these recent years and it is therefore natural to focus on them. The reason why I specify them as reactive is because this may have important consequences for the interpretation of the role of allies and the context in general. The effect or mechanism for proactive and reactive movements may not be the same. This does not mean that my conclusions only regard such events, but the conclusions may not be so easily transferable.

In France such reactive protest movements are quite common and there are accordingly many to choose from. Since the beginning of the 80s there have been several movements regarding education (1984, 1986, 1995, 2004, 2005, 2009), retirement (1993, 1995, 2003, 2007, 2010), working life (1994, 1997-1998, 2006, 2009) and other goals (2005). From these I have decided to include four movements. These are the 1995, 2003 and 2010 movements that primarily regarded pensions and retirement[8] and the 2006 movement against the introduction of new working contracts. There are several reasons why I have chosen these movements. They were first of all chosen so as to have two cases of "success" and two cases of "failure", especially since I should be careful not to include more movements for fear of losing context specificity. Secondly, they needed to be of a substantial size in order to be comparable. Thirdly, some of the cases mix demands that make them hard to discern from each other such as the 2009 movement. Fourthly, there needed to be data available. For the older movements like 1984, 1986, 1993 and 1994 using newspaper data would be much harder since Factivia only includes newspapers since 1995. The cases that have been chosen are also some of the most well-documented movements in terms of scholarly literature. Using any of the other movements could have proved difficult simply because no or little data would be available.

Therefore I am left with four movements that are predominantly similar. My study therefore resembles what Mill would call the method of difference and Przeworski and Teune would name the Most Similar System Design (George and Bennet 2005: 165). The idea is to keep constant all factors but one, which will leave one factor to explain the difference in the dependent variable. This is an ideal-type setting and will rarely be found in a political setting. It is still a very useful way to think for my study. For example, since the statist aspects of the political context are very much the same this will not be a potent variable that I will look at, even though the literature indicates its prevalence. The same goes for political culture, party

[8] For the 1995 movement, aspects of the 1995 education movement will also be incorporated as the two more or less converge after some time

system, electoral system, issue salience[9] etc. This leaves a more restrained set of factors (discussed in the theory chapter) that will explain the differences in outcomes.

3.4 Why protest movements in France?

Why do I focus on French protest movements? I argue that France is a good place to study social movement outcomes for several reasons. Firstly, since France is regarded as a strong state social movements are unlikely to achieve substantial success by opposing government actions in France (Kitschelt 1986). When this still seems to occur it is interesting to see what it is that makes this unintended outcome come about. Secondly, as seen before France has had many different movements the last years with different outcomes, some are successes and others are defeats. Thirdly, France has a high level of mobilization and a history of popular contention unlike most countries. French political history is literally littered with contentious episodes such as the French Revolution, the commune of Paris in 1871, May 1968 etc. Dalton (2008) comparing 21 democracies, finds that France is one of the most contentious countries, with 43 % of respondents saying they have participated in a challenging act (lawful demonstrations, boycotts, unofficial strikes, occupying a building). It is higher than most other big democracies such as Italy with 37 %, the US with 36%, Germany 30%, Great Britain 25% and Japan 14%. This provides for an interesting context in which these mechanisms are embedded.

Lastly, not much research has been conducted (at least not in English) on such movements in France. A few examples still exist, such as Kitschelt (1986), Kriesi (1995), Tilly (1986) and Béland and Marier (2006). It is thus a somewhat new but still very rich empirical context within which I will seek to answer my research question. This is strengthened by the fact that the main bulk of research on social movements (and much other political science research for that matter) has been conducted in a North American context (Gerring 2008: 676; Uba 2007). Choosing France is therefore a good way of accumulating knowledge regarding movements in a somewhat different context. However, this also means that one has to be careful not to draw too widespread conclusions and remain cognizant of the fact that what remains true in the French context may not be so in other contexts and vice versa.

[9] All the cases are "high-profile" movements, meaning movements where the issues at hand are the most threatening for the authorities (Kriesi et al. 1995b: 103).

3.5 Information about data:

Newspapers are my main source of information for this thesis. There are according to Earl et al (2004) several possible problems with newspaper data. The first problem relates to what is called selection bias. It means that newspapers will not cover all the possible events. In fact only a certain amount of events will be covered. Half, according to some (Earl et al. 2004), or even less according (2-5%) to others (Fillieule 2007). This need not be a problem since even 5% of the total events could be representative of the larger population, provided that newspapers do not bias their coverage. Research suggests newspapers are attracted to violent and big events (Fillieule 2007: 217). This is a serious issue that must be taken into consideration in my research. However, it is not of outmost importance for me since I do not seek to establish a general account of contention in France but rather focus on four pre-defined cases. The next problem relates to "description bias". This means that in the events covered by the newspapers there may exist an under- or overestimation of the number of participants or injured. Still, such hard facts are mostly reported accurately (Earl et al. 2004:72). However, soft facts, such as the meaning given to it by the participants or the ideology of the movement may be distorted and affected by the political leanings of the newspaper or other factors. This appears to be especially true when newspapers base their articles on information either from the authorities or organizers (Earl et al. 2004). This is very important for me as the meanings given to the mobilization, the surrounding political context, the interactions with the government etc, may be biased in some newspapers. One solution proposed is to look at several newspapers. Collecting multiple sources means that one gets several points of view on contentious issues. In France one would expect for example Le Figaro to be very different from l'Humanité or Libération. I therefore include different newspapers and will attempt to crosscheck any information that appears controversial.

To find the newspaper articles I used the Dow Jones Factivia news retriever. This contains more than 28 500 sources and is updated continuously (Factivia 2011). AFP, Reuters, Le Monde, Le Figaro, Libération, L'Humanité, les Echos, Marianne etc. and various local newspapers are included in the database. There is thus a high degree of diversity in the sources since newspapers such as Libération represent the left-side of the spectrum whereas Le Figaro is more rightist in their coverage. In order to capture both the build-up to a movement and the aftermath I considered articles 2 years before and after the actual movement as relevant in the preliminary search. This means that any article appearing

between 2001 and 2005 would be considered as relevant for the 2003 movement. In order to capture a wide variety of actions I used the search words grève (strike), manifestation (demonstration), occupation (occupation), France and movement social (social movement). In total I got over 2000 articles for the whole period. Of these about half were downloaded in PDF-format. After closer examination 87 articles were retained for the 1995 movement, 56 for the 2003 movement, 37 for the 2006 movement and 243 for the 2010 movement. It is interesting to note the enormous increase in articles for the 2010 movement. This is partly because many smaller newspapers were added only recently to the Factivia database. The number of articles for the 2006 movement remains unexplainably small and I will therefore for this movement have to rely more on academic sources and organizational reports. As the total number of newspaper articles exceeds 400 I will not refer to them in the discussion even if they form the basis of much of the timelines, outcome debates etc. However, I will refer to them if they bring special, precise or controversial information.

Academic work and organizational reports constitute the rest of my sources. Little research has been conducted using the specific theories and concepts that I use in my thesis. I therefore have to content with historical and idiosyncratic studies of the movements in question. There may be some overrepresentation of "leftist" scholars who identify with different parts of the movement. This means that there may be a slight bias. However, I believe this to be a minor issue as I do not in any case intend to discuss the legitimacy of either reforms or protest. Additionally, whenever possible I try to triangulate with media sources in order to verify suspicious claims. Most of the academic sources are in French. Regarding the organizational reports some pertain from government agencies such as INSEE, others come from businesses like CSA or voluntary associations exemplified by CAJ. All newspaper articles and reports are in French.

To summarize I will conduct a multiple case study of four movements with two successes and two failures. I aim to generate knowledge on three different levels. 1). The cases in my study. 2). Protest movements in France. 3). General social movement theory. Regarding the latter aspects I hope to elucidate and refine the theories, pointing to links and mechanisms that attach independent variables to the dependent ones. For this I will rely heavily on newspaper data gathered from French newspapers and scholarly literature on the movements.

4.0 Analysis of the movements and their political contexts

This chapter contains the analysis of the different movements. In the beginning I will briefly discuss French unions and retirement policy, since these are essential in order to understand the movements. Following this, for each movement, I will present a timeline, pursued by a discussion of the outcome. After that I will explain each outcome by using the variables identified in the theory chapter. I will first however, remind the reader of these.

The different variables:

As was seen in the theory chapter there are several variables that have been seen to influence a movement's chances for success. These can be divided in the movement controlled *internal* variables and other *external* variables that are outside the control of the movement (Amenta and Caren 2004; Uba 2007).

Among the internal variables we find the degree of *disruption*. The higher this is the more the movement will be able to threaten central interests of politicians and states, and therefore force a favourable outcome for the movement. The *size* of protests also seems to be positive for favourable outcomes as it signals strong contention within society which can ultimately be an obstacle to the re-election of politicians in power. Other relevant variables that will be looked at are *variety* (the more varied the more chances for success) and *novelty* (the more novel the more chances for success). Furthermore, I will consider the degree of *factionalization* both between SMOs and within them. The more factionalized the SMOs are, the smaller chance a movement has to succeed.

Among the external variables I will focus on the presence of *allies*, especially political parties. It is thought that such allies facilitate favourable outcomes. This is especially true if allies can be found among the decision-makers. Secondly I focus on the relevance of *public opinion*. It is believed that the stronger support the movement has within the public the harder it will be for the government to oppose the wishes and demands of the movement. Another issue is whether public opinion is moving. If a movement gets more popular it is a sign of increasing conscience of the demands in society. Should it decrease it indicates that the movement is

losing the public and nearing defeat. As for the specific political structures these do not wary much, and will therefore not be discussed at length.

In addition I will focus on the tactics employed by the government to withhold the movement and keep it by influencing decisions of the state. This has been conceptualized as a set of *protest avoidance tactics* by Béland and Marier (2006). I will therefore look for signs that the government actively tried to stop both mobilization and the influence of movements. Following the lessons from the political mediation approach I keep track of the interactions between variables, even though they are separated under distinct headlines.

I will now present two important factors in my thesis. First of all I will present a quick outline of French trade unions. These play an important role in most of the movements and can as such be considered as the SMOs. Secondly, I present how the pension system has evolved. This is because three out of my four movements came about after an unpopular pension reform. It is therefore important to have some background knowledge of this before analysing the movements.

4.1 Trade unions in France

There are numerous trade unions in France. Five confederations of trade unions are recognized as social partners and representatives at the national level. These are: CFDT (Confédération française démocratique du travail), CGT (Confédération générale du travail), FO (Force Ovrière), CFTC (Conféderation française des travailleurs chrétiens) and CFE-CGC (Conféderation française de l'encadrement – Conféderation générale des cadres). Other unions include G-10 (Groupe des dix), UNSA (Union nationale des syndicats autonomes), FSU (Féderation syndicale unitaire) and the many unions united under the name SUD (Union syndicale Solidaires) (Crettiez and Sommier 2002). Unions were forbidden under the La Chapelier law of 1791, but legalized in 1884 (Shorter and Tilly 1974). The CGT was created in 1895 and confirmed in 1906, in the Amiens Charter, its independence from political parties and the state. During the 20s-30s an important split developed between socialist and communist unions. This was further established when FO departed from the CGT in 1948, due to controversies regarding the Marshall-programme and the relationship with the Soviet Union. FO went in a more reformist way than CGT. During the after-war period the fractionalization has become even more important and many of the above mentioned unions

appeared due to internal disputes that resulted in subsequent splits in older trade unions. The competition between unions has also been maintained very high by two other factors. One is the existence of so-called professional elections, which pits different unions against each other to become delegates of the workers and members of the firm committees. This is often used in order to show how well a union represents workers. There is low turn-out, but it still creates clear competition between trade unions. The second is declining levels of union-membership. In fact only 9 % of workers were member of a union in 2003, and CGT, the oldest union, lost over two thirds of its members between 1976 and 2003 (Sommier 2003:39-41). This number is decreasing and unions are fighting to attract new members. There is thus often much contention between unions. That contention is a regular trait between unions is evident in the general movement literature which claims that the "need to compete for organizational resources, establish distinct niches, and claim exclusive credit for victories create barriers to inter-organizational collaboration" (Krinsky and Reese 2006: 630).

A majority of protest events in France are connected to so-called old social movements, whereas in other countries such as the Netherlands, Germany or Switzerland, New Social Movements account for a higher percentage (Kriesi et al. 1995: 19) This is according to Kriesi et al. (1995) linked to the fact that labour relations have not been pacified and institutionalized to the same extent in France as in the other countries. As trade such unions play an integral part in protest in France. In the timeline of the movement and the following analysis I will especially focus on the CGT, CFDT, and FO and less frequently the others. These will be analyzed as any other SMO in its role in mobilizing people.

4.2 Pension system in France

The modern French pension system, which remains a highly contentious topic in France, dates back to the immediate world-war II aftermath. The state wanted to put in place a universalized pension system. This was however opposed by the CGT who saw it as an attempt to appease the population and therefore as a threat to their revolutionary goals (Crettiez and Sommier 2002). Several special regimes ("regimes speciaux") which mostly concern workers in certain big state-owned companies were thus put in place, and trade unions were placed on managerial boards in order to supervise the pensions and select staff. Around the year 2000 some 122 special regimes, which covered 20% of the working population, existed (Béland and Hansen 2000: 52). After 1967 representatives of the employers make up 50% of these

boards. Even though it was still the National Assembly that fixed pensions etc., unions remained attached to its importance in the management of pensions and social security. People were in fact making a direct contribution to a "solidarity fund" for the financing of health care and retirements. This fund was independent of parliamentary majorities and the budgets they would enact (Bensaïd 1996:111). Pensions were raised in 1971 from 40% to 50% and in 1982, the newly elected Socialist Prime Minister Francois Mitterand decreased the retirement age from 65 to 60. During the 80s and 90s there was a growing consensus among political elites that something had to be done with the pension system because of increasing economic difficulties. Several reports were issued and their conclusions were mostly the same: pensions should be less generous and people must work for a longer period of time (Béland 2001: 164). These reports were however not put in place due mainly to the electoral risks it would involve introducing the reform. In 1993, right after the sweeping victory of the right, Balladur, the new rightist Prime Minister engaged in discussions with the unions in order to implement some of the propositions that had appeared in earlier reports. Unions were able to obtain a strict separation of contributory and non-contributory benefits, which meant they would keep the upper hand on pensions in the future. The unions then more or less supported the reform, which touched mostly the "regime general". It brought the years needed to reach full entitlement to 40 years; the average on which pensions would be made was extended to 25 years instead of 10; the indexation of pensions would be shifted from prices to wages (Béland 2001:164).

In 1995 the government tried to extend this to the "regime speciaux" without luck, as we shall see below. In 2003 the private sector saw the years needed to reach full entitlement increased to 41 years, whereas functionaries would have to contribute at least 40 years. The last major reform came in 2010. It entailed an increase in the number of years one had to have worked from 41 to 41.5 in order to obtain full pension. It furthermore gradually increased from 60 to 62 years the age at which a person, having contributed the years necessary, could become a pensioner with full pension. For those that had not contributed 41.5 years, full pension age was pushed from 65 to 67. These three reforms (1995, 2003 and 2010) generated popular protest movements, mobilizing broad segments of society and constitute three of my four cases.

I now turn to explaining the four cases. As there are many dates and it can be quite confusing, table 1 provides a summary of the movements and the most important dates. Start date refers to when the movement started. The reason why n/a is prominent for the 1995 movement is that the protests kept the main part of the reform from entering the parliament. In 2006 the movement managed to repel the reform *after* it was promulgated.

Table 1: Overview of movements

Movement	1995	2003	2006	2010
Start date	15th November	13th May	16th January	15th February
Start debate in Parliament	n/a	10th June	31st January	7th September
Constitutional council appealed to	n/a	18th July	1st March	2nd November
Promulgation date	n/a	22nd August	31st March	9th November
President	Jacques Chirac	Jacques Chirac	Jacques Chirac	Nicolas Sarkozy
Prime Minister	Alain Juppé	Jean-Pierre Raffarin	Dominique de Villepin	Francois Fillon
Most prominent role in contention played by	Railroad workers	Education personnel	Students	Refineries
Outcome	Success	Failure	Success	Failure

4.3 Movement of 1995

Some authors, like Touraine (1996), have contended that it is not a proper social movement since it lacks concrete plans for how society should be run. The movement in 1995 did not propose any changes to society; it was merely a refusal of the type of society that was proposed by the state. Furthermore this did not produce any durable effects, and it lacked programmatic capacity (Touraine 1996:48-50). This may seem plausible since the pension reform that this refused was carried out in 2003 and 2010. However, following the definition presented in the introduction, this and the other cases are clearly social movements. They act outside of regular channels in order to challenge the government's planned reform. As such they qualify to be understood as proper movements. Other authors, such as Waters (2003) and Della Porta and Diani (2006: 33-35) have also qualified this as a social movement. This preliminary remark regards all of the movements in the thesis.

4.3.1 Timeline

It is important to give a brief account of the political context at the time of the movement. Jacques Chirac was elected President in 1995 on a generous campaign stressing the fight against unemployment and social insecurity (Howard 1996: 249) He placed himself primarily in the centre and beat his socialist opponent, Lionel Jospin in the second round with a score of 52.6 percent the 7th of May 1995. Alain Juppé was then appointed Prime Minister. It quickly became clear that the new leaders in place had changed priorities and called for strong austerity measures so that inflation and debt could be reduced in order to meet the difficult criterions for adhering to the new European Monetary Union. In fact, the social security deficit amounted to 62 billion francs in 1995, whereas the total budget deficit was 345 billion francs (Howard 1996: 248). The first measure to be enacted was the freeze in pay of public officials. The main plan, which had been conceived of in secret by the Prime Minister and certain of his collaborators, was announced November 15th by the Prime Minister. This included a raise in social charges, bigger contributions to pension funds and in health related matters and the infamous increase in the number of years that a person had to have worked in order to obtain full retirement. This increase would mean that public employees would have to work 40 instead of 37.5 years, which would bring them on the same level as private employees, who had seen the contribution years increase to 40 in 1993. This was thus an effort to harmonize the special regimes with the general regime (Béland 2001). The government also wanted to take some of the management powers of the unions away by each year deciding on a budget for health insurance spending. This was by many unions seen as a stab in the back, since the measure had been introduced so hastily and there had been no indications that pensions would be touched (Lindvall 2011). It led to a general uproar in society that materialized in numerous contentious events in the weeks to follow, to which I turn now.

Already in October students at the University of Rouen went on strike to demand better universities, more professors and bigger budgets. In several provincial universities, strikes and occupations took place during the end of October and beginning of November. Toulouse, Metz and other universities were at times completely blocked. The minister of Education, François Bayrou, tried reasoning with the universities by announcing more money to the poorest universities (Reuters 1995b). This did not appease the students who continued their

strikes. However, it was not until Juppé announced his retirement plan that things really started stirring. The underlying grievances relating to a fear for the future could be felt throughout the country (Bensaïd 1996; Touraine 1996). The "Juppé-reform" was a catalyst for much of these grievances. In many ways it was an opportunity for people to vent their fears and frustrations. It triggered social networks and different collective identities into action around common themes and a common "enemy". In addition, the SNCF announced that they planned closing several local train lines. All seven unions representing public agents called for a strike November 24th. This day almost 500 000 people, according to the government and many more according to the unions, took to the streets in order to demonstrate. During the following days the RATP (Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens) entered the movement. The 1st of December both the CGT and FO called for a generalization of the public official strike. The next days strikes continued in the public sector with 40 % of both SNCF and RATP on strike, and 90% of drivers in both companies refusing to work (Touraine 1996: 311). Half of all post-offices were blocked. The strike also touched airports, buses and electricity. The following day between 500 000 and 800 000 people demonstrated all around the country. The Prime Minister launched meetings with industry officials in order to improve the plan. Simultaneously the Socialist party started to enter more fiercely on the stage by supporting the movement actively and asking for the complete withdrawal of the plan. A number of other allies appeared when 500 intellectuals signed a petition in Le Monde supporting the workers. December 7th the most contentious day of the movement followed with more than 1 million people in the streets. In Paris, however, there were only 16 000. This had not been the case in past mobilizations such as in 1968, when most events took place in Paris. The degree to which the whole country was involved in the movement is evidence of a decentralization of contention and especially of demonstrations (Fillieule and Tartakowsky 2008). The next day leaders of the SNCF announced that they would postpone signing the contract plan at least a week. The tenth of December Mr Juppé announced, on national television, that they would not align the two different regimes, and that the pension age would not be changed. He also announced his intention to hold a social summit discussing with social partners various measures that should be taken. The unions seemed dubious to this announcement, but recognized that an opening to negotiation was good.

There would still be several big demonstrations in the days to follow. Especially the 12th big demonstrations were held in the whole country regrouping around two million people according to the unions. The unions, especially CGT and FO kept up the pressure in order to

influence the government further on issues pertaining to social security in general. The unions also feared that the authorities would not be true to their words and demanded to have written guarantees by the government. The last big day of demonstrations came the 16th as more than a million people, according to the organizers, and 586 000 according to the government went in the streets. The 21st of December different actors met for a national social summit. The Prime Minister and eight other ministers met with numerous employers unions and trade unions, including the CGT, FO and CFDT. Together they agreed on several measures including policy promising to incite youth employment, and other employment friendly measures. Both the CGT and FO seemed unhappy with the measures of the summit, whereas CFDT and CFTC were content especially with the measures on youth employment (Touraine 1996: 315).

4.3.2 The outcome

Authors have disagreed regarding the level of success of the movement. According to Touraine (1996) the movement was a relative success in the way that the most contentious part of the Juppé project, namely the reform of the pension-system, was withdrawn December 10th. However, cuts were still conducted and the movement could not "give the country a new course". The social security reform was still enacted and the unions were not able to secure a continued and full role in future negotiations. Others again claim this as one of the big exploits of the left in the new liberalized Europe. Filoche (2004) for example names the 1995 movement in the same sentence as 1968. Also Trat (1996) seems to give a positive assessment of the outcomes of the movement, also referring to the fact that many "cheminots" for example found an increased focus on their cause, and that their identity was finally recognized. This is what may be described as an internal impact, and even though it is not the main focus of this study, it should not be ignored.

There is thus a certain controversy regarding the actual results of this movement. Was it a success? If yes, how big a success? First we have to think about the movement's goals. It is clear that the movement's most pressing goal was the withdrawal of the policy on pensions. The leader of CGT, Bernard Thibault for example exclaimed the 6th of December that "what we want is the withdrawal of the Juppé plan and renegotiating the contract of the plan after a

national debate has been organized"[10] (in Béroud and Mouriaux 1997: 92-93). They also wished to prevent the implementation of certain social security measures and secure the rights to negotiate. In the most radical moments they wished to completely change the way society works and get a more equal France. What we see is a mix of proactive and reactive goals. Proactive here entails the possibility of securing higher benefits for its constituents in the future, meaning the introduction of new advantages. It is also a claim that would be considered a high level of success if it were realized (Amenta and Young 1999). The other claims are reactive, meaning that they involve preventing the implementation of new disadvantages. These are clearly mid-level claims that therefore involve mid-level successes, which would mean benefits stay the same for an indefinite period of time, but that they are subject to change. In other words, the reform was postponed, for an indefinite but not infinite period of time.

The main parts of the movement can be said to be a moderate success. They obtained the withdrawal of the pension reform, which was their prime target, as well as minor successes regarding youth employment, which received one time subventions. At the same time the movement's most radical claims regarding a re-structuring of society and relations between labour and capital were not put in place. Although the existing society was put into question, the movement never managed to capitalize on this and present its vision of society. It is therefore safe to say that this was a moderate success for the main parts of the movement. Also the students in the movement achieved minor success through subventions and increased budgets. Their core goals were met, but nothing more than that.

4.3.3 The question of causation

One big question remains before explaining how this success came about, and that is whether it is plausible that the movement lead to this outcome. In other words, would the outcome have been the same without the movement? This is a question of extreme importance in the study of outcomes of protest and social movements. There is no clear-cut answer to whether movements *in general* are effective. Amenta et al (2010) going through numerous journal articles, found that a slight majority of them concluded that movements are efficient. Earlier scholars have noted that protest is rational only inasmuch as it can achieve favourable

[10] All French quotations have been translated by the author

outcomes (Burstein et al. 1995). When looking at this movement it seems appropriate to first of all note that the movement did not go unseen. The countless demonstrations, strikes, economic costs and petitions were felt by the authorities. Alain Juppé announced on national television that he understood the French, and their feeling of fear (Le Monde 1996a). It is improbable that the outcome would have been the same in the absence of such an assertive movement, especially when considering who could have influenced the government if not the movement. Already the whole government seemed unified, so did the deputies of the right. Cracks did emerge, however, these were *in response* to the movement and would not have done so in its absence (Reuters 1995f). Furthermore, the social actors that could be capable of convincing the government of changing were in the streets. It is thus safe to say that it is because of the movement that this outcome came about. It is not spurious and cannot be attributed to outside factors, especially since external, foreign factors were largely positive to the reform such as the EU and Germany (Béroud and Mouriaux 1997). Indeed, it seems fairly obvious that the movement had an impact. This may be because it was a reactive movement. In a proactive movement one must also include the possibility that a given outcome came about due to the preferences of the policy-makers, independent of the mobilization. However, as in this case the authorities are per definition hostile towards the movement's goals this seems like a very implausible explanation.

4.3.4 Why did the 1995 movement succeed?

I now turn to explaining the reasons why the movement succeeded in 1995. I will first assess the internal variables meaning the various tactics employed and the actors. Afterwards I will focus on the role external actors played such as allies and public opinion.

Internal variables

Disruption and size of the movement

I start off by identifying the actions of the movement itself. The disruption of society was very heavy. Disruption is here understood as economic and property damage as well as infringement on social mobility. In fact trains, buses and metros were all blocked, and heavy traffic jams kept people from being able to travel freely. Indeed, November 29th, traffic jams

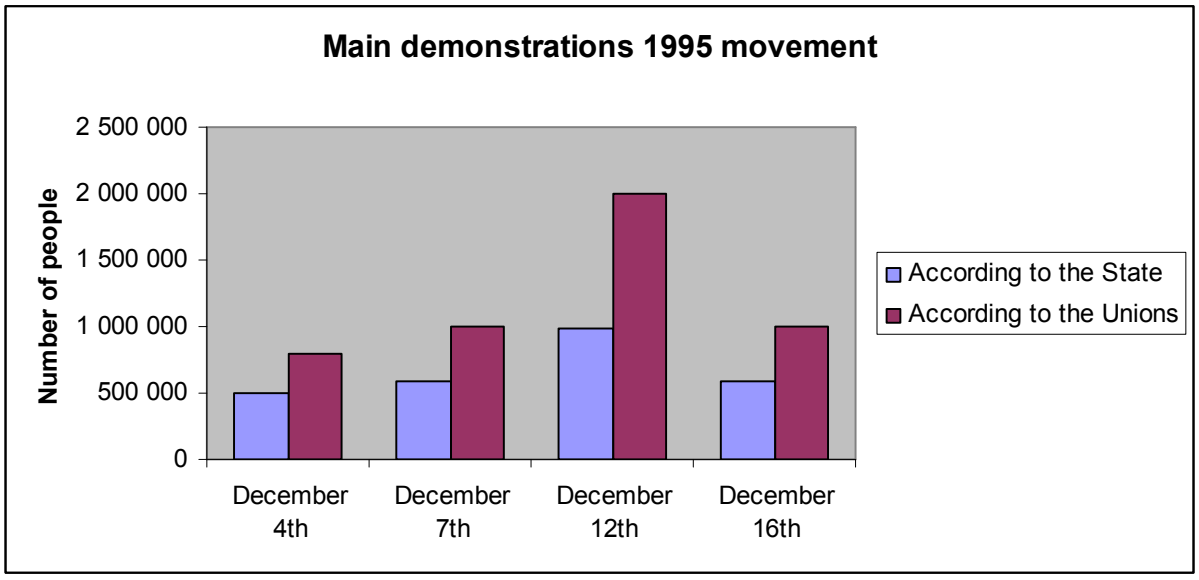
were over 500 kilometres long in Paris (Reuters 1995e). The economic costs were also substantial. SNCF alone lost over 100 million francs per day of strike, whereas the national Post-company lost in total over 1 billion francs during the protest movement (Le Monde 1996b). The total costs of the movement is said to have taken away between 0.2%-0.3% percentage points of economic growth in 1995 (INSEE 2003, 2007). This shows the immense costs the protest movement was putting on the country, and why the politicians had to figure out a way to get out of this deadlock. Also in other sectors the disruption was taking a toll on consumers and politicians alike. One such example is the energy sector where the state owned electricity company EDF had to cut production of electricity from 52 000 megawatt to 18 000 megawatt (Reuters 1995d). This forced the state to import much electricity from foreign countries and thus increased costs for French citizens. In terms of violence the movement was quite peaceful, and although heated debates took place, relatively few were injured. Notable exceptions exist however, as with the example of the 25 miners in Lorraine who were injured December 7th and 8th. The disruption can be conceived of as negative inducements, using the terms of Piven and Cloward (1977), that has proved to be important for several different movements. In this sense the movement managed to deprive the elite of something in their interest, which in this case could especially be economic and social stability. The threatening mechanism thus seems to be very potent. This remains particularly valid since the reasons for the reform were exactly a growing economic deficit. The threatening mechanism thus seems to be very strong.

The number of strikers was also very high. According to official statistics almost 6 000 000 workdays were lost due to strikes in 1995, compared to 1 million in 1994 and 1996. The public sector was responsible for approximately 2/3 of the strike days (Groux and Pernot 2008: 87). During the first few days of December around 40 % of both SNCF and RATP were on strike, and 90% of drivers in both companies refused to work. During the fourth trimester of 1995 railway transportations were down by 25%, whereas personal road transport was down 2.8%. Household consummation of transports during this period was down 4% (INSEE 2007). Although these numbers may not seem that impressive, it is important to remember that this takes into account the three months in total, whereas the movement did not start catching ground until the middle of November. This blocked the country at a remarkable scale. In response to this the government tried to organize a counter-movement basing themselves on users of public transportations. Only 1000 people showed up and it was heavily

denounced on the front-page of Le Monde (Le Monde 1995b). This is also an indication of how much the government feared that this would continue.

When it comes to the demonstrations conducted by the movement these were at times enormous. As can be seen from table 1 the 4th and 7th of December gathered 800 000 and 1 000 000 people to protest the reform according to the unions. The most impressive display of power came the 12th of December with over 2 000 000 demonstrating in the whole of France. These are powerful signs to the government of the unpopularity of reform. This is one of three ways in which a movement can influence an outcome, namely by making the authorities aware of the preferences of society (Burstein 1999: 12-17). The demonstrations were in fact the biggest since the ones taking place in May 1968 (Touraine 1996). Both demonstrations and strikes point to a very interesting aspect, namely the importance of size. Without so many people in the streets and on strike the movement would not have been able to disrupt society as much as they did. This also helped attracting media attention which again made it harder for the government to ignore and withstand the enormous pressure.

Figure 1: Main demonstrations 1995 movement



Source: Touraine (1996)

By its strong mobilization throughout the country the movement managed first of all to prove its power and the fact that they were able to block the country. This could be a serious threat to security and economy. As such the threatening mechanism identified in the literature review seems to be playing an important role. Its long duration was also a sign of resilience,

and signalled that the consequences of the movement could be even bigger. The government understood that if they were to force this reform through they would risk blocking the country even more. These conclusions seem to give credit to Piven and Cloward (1977) who claim that in order for a movement to obtain concessions from elites it has to be disruptive and impose negative inducements on the government. This also indicates that both threatening and signalling mechanisms played a role accounting for the outcome.

Characteristics of the movement

When it comes to the other tactical variables it is difficult to find any clear effect. There was little novelty involved in the different protest actions. Both strikes and demonstrations have been used since the middle of the 19th century and are among the most common ways of showing ones discontent both in France and elsewhere (Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1986). Regarding the variety of means, strikes and demonstrations were by far the most used protest actions. Some occupations took place such as when strikers from Air France occupied the landing strips at the Orly airport the 30th of November, but it was not a very predominant tactic (Reuters 1995d).

Social Movement Organizations

Defining the actions of the movement is important, but just as important are the actors behind these actions. The main actors of the movement are the unions. These can be labelled as diverse SMOs as was identified by McCarthy and Zald (1977). An important variable is the degree of unity between the unions and the way they coordinate and manage to provide coherent framing and demands.

When it comes to the 1995 movement the unions were fairly coherent, especially in the beginning. The unions were all critical towards the reform and they seemed to stand strong against the government. Much would change when the leader of the CFDT, Nicole Notat, announced that she was favourable to a reform. This was taken as clear support for the government, although she later claimed this was just a recognition that something had to be done with the pension system. She was booed at during demonstrations and faced much internal opposition. For example, CFDT in the railway sector called for continuing the strikes along with FO and CGT (Reuters 1995e). The CFDT also participated in most of the joint

efforts such as demonstrations, reunions and summits. FO and CGT proved to be good partners during the whole campaign. The leaders even shook hands during one of the earlier demonstrations (Reuters 1995f). The fact that these two unions which traditionally have been opposed on so many issues managed to find common ground, gave strength to the movement and meant they could continue their actions over a long period of time. The union between the two former enemies, formerly divided over the communist heritage, is often cited to be a reason for the success of the movement (Béland and Marier 2006).

There was thus a certain tendency of factionalization between the unions. However, this was by no means a big factionalization since two of the biggest unions stayed united, and moreover the government did not capitalize on this in order to break them further by offering selective concessions.

External variables:

I here refer to the external factors such as allies, public opinion or strategies by authorities that may increase or decrease the chances for success for a movement.

Allies

I turn first to the allies. The obvious allies of this movement were the political parties of the left, mainly the communist party (PC) and the socialist party (PS). The PS was strong in its criticism of the actions of the government and called repeatedly for the opening of negotiations. The party also participated in demonstrations, but remained careful not to actively call for demonstrations, as the PS did not want to be substituted for the unions (Touraine 1996: 308). The socialist party was also very careful not to call for either the resignation of Alain Juppé or the outright withdrawal of the plan. This is linked to the internal divisions of the socialist party, and especially the division between its "culture of government" maintained during the Mitterrand years, and its "culture of opposition" which it nurtured before 1981. The PS leader, Lionel Jospin, continuously expressed his support for the movement, but tried keep his party from becoming a "counter-government". It was an effort not to repeat the mistakes of Mitterrand in 1968 where he had stated that he was ready to take over power after de Gaulle. This was a contributing factor to the dismal results for Mitterrand's party in the following legislative elections (Dogan 1984; Rotman 2008). Taking

up this role would probably not have been accepted in the party as certain parts of the reform had been proposed up to several times by earlier socialist governments (Béland 2001: 164). A strong anti-reform stand could therefore be conceived as negative and hypocritical. Another crucial factor was that the Socialist party knew that they had the possibility of finding themselves in government already a few years after this. It might then have to make unpopular decisions regarding social security and the pension system. It would in that case be hard to seem credible. The PS was therefore torn between a wish to support the movement and therefore hope to gain support and a fear of ending up in a situation where they would seem to go back on promises and support made to the movement. The PC on the other hand was more expressive in their support since it had no real hopes of coming in a governing position any time soon. This meant that they could give their outright support to the movement. They called more precisely for the complete withdrawal of the reform and Alain Bocquet, a PC deputy, for example said that the communist group supports "massively the railway-workers because they are right" (Reuters 1995c).

The 18th, when the social security bill was to be voted, communists and socialists tried to block and oppose the bill. They called for the suspension of the debate several times and interfered several times with points of order. This was however not fruitful, and as seen before the final parts of the social security reform were passed. The opposition therefore seems to have played a minor role in the middle success that the movement obtained. The support and solidarity with the movement is substantial. However, the success was obtained without any considerable help from the PS and PC, and when they could have helped the movement, the opposition failed to do so. This suggests that allies, at least non-decision-making ones, may not be very important. Indeed, allies are present, but this does not necessarily translate into increased influence.

There were some notable extra-institutional allies. These included several intellectuals who the 5th of December launched a petition in support of the social movement and denounced the Juppé plan[11]. The most noteworthy person on this list is without a doubt the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (Le Monde 1995a). Bourdieu held a famous speech to railway workers in Lyon the 12th where he announced that "I am here to give you our support…". When Bourdieu held his speech it seemed to incite the workers and make them believe that the fight could be won. It

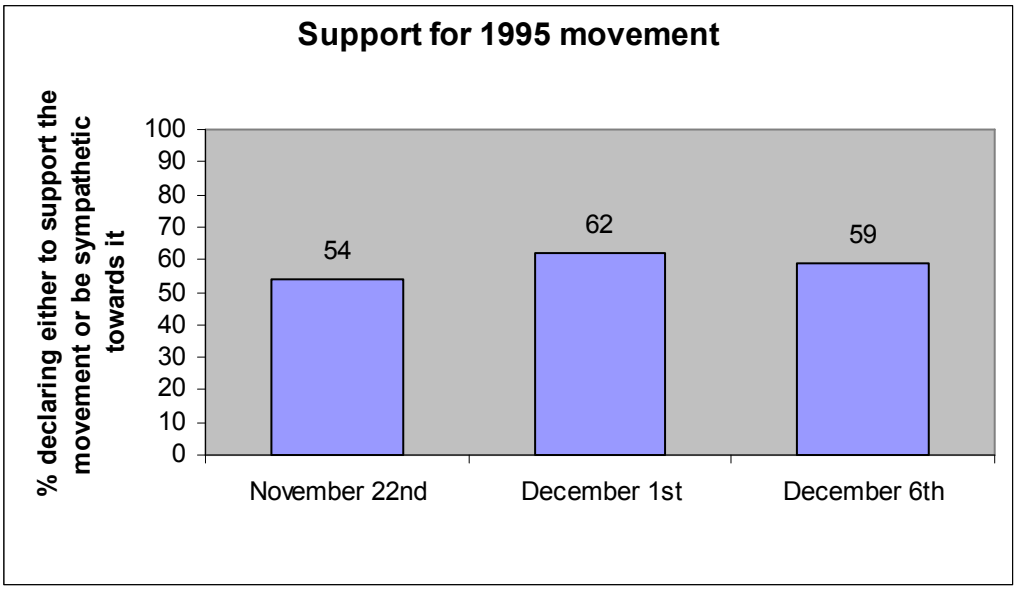
[11] It was also a counter response to the petition initiated by the magazine Esprit November 24th in support of Nicole Notat of CFDT.

was also a clear signal to the government when personalities like this expressed such strong views against the reform. However, one should not put too much into this. Around 500 intellectuals signed the petition and it is improbable that this had any effect on the final result. This is all the more probable since neither Juppé nor the government mentioned the petition or any of its participants at any point in time.

Public Opinion

Another very important variable identified in the existing theories is public opinion. It is said to mediate the direct actions of a movement, and having a favourable public opinion is essential for a movement to obtain desirable outcomes.

Figure 2: Degree of support 1995 movement



Source: CSA (2004)

The evolution of public opinion on the movement can be seen in figure 2 above. I base myself on data gathered by CSA, a public opinion group that has conducted extensive public opinion polls on contemporary issues, including social movements, since the 1980s (CSA 2011). The attitudes towards the protest movement are fairly stable, but a slight upwards trend may be said to exist. The movement does seem to become more popular as the strikes and demonstrations gain in importance. It is also interesting to note that the movement is favoured by at least 50% of the population. This is not unique for social movements in France. In fact,

most contemporary movements regularly gather around 50% of support and sympathy. When looking at the data from CSA one notices that only 5 of the 49 polls on social movements show less than 50% support for the movement in question (CSA 2004). What seems special about 1995 is the fact that public support increases as the movement develops, meaning that even though transportations are blocked, which creates big problems for regular citizens, the movement still enjoys a high legitimacy. Although one cannot rule out other factors, it might be that the movement influenced the preferences of the public by opposing the government, appearing on television and presenting arguments regarding the perceived unfairness of the reform. This is the second mechanism by which movements may achieve a favourable outcome according to Burstein (1999).

The coupling of strong disruption with a highly favourable public opinion gave a very strong message to the government and signalled increasing opposition, which corresponds with the first of Burstein's (1999) three mechanisms. The movement seems to have modified the terms of the debate among politicians and citizens and as such made politicians more aware of the contention in society (Le Monde 1995c). It also gave rise to a new concept widely used in the media world, also in relation to many precedent similar movements, namely "grève par procuration" (Le Monde 2010b; Les Echos 2003b). This can roughly be translated by proxy strike, which means that the strikers represent large parts of the population who are not striking for various reasons[12] (Groux and Pernot 2008: 138-139). There was a feeling that the strikers represented something more than their own interests. The support that the strikers felt also gave them incentives to continue striking, and the solidarity expressed by bystanders was a contributing factor to the longevity of the movement. The proxy strike coupled with strong public sympathy can be seen as a contributing factor to the success of the movement (Touraine 1996).

Authorities

Apart from the reform itself, it was the manner in which the authorities introduced the reform proposal that caused the most uproar. In fact, during his campaign, presidential candidate Jacques Chirac had stated that he would fight the "fracture sociale" in France. It therefore came as a big surprise when he announced that he would reform the pension system. This fact

[12] In the private sector for example fears of losing salary and/or jobs may keep people from striking.

was heavily denounced by the unions (Reuters 1995a). That this incoherence contributed to the rage of the people has been highlighted by others (Touraine 1996). The strategy of the government against the movement can best be described as lacking. There is some evidence of framing the reform as necessary. This is part of the protest avoidance tactics identified by Béland and Marier (2006). Numerous times Alain Juppé stated that the reform was highly needed in order for France to join the Euro-collaboration. Also Jacques Chirac expressed concerns that if this reform did not go through France's relationship with the EU could be jeopardized. However, this framing was not excessive and is not more than one would expect in such a situation.

To summarize

The success of the 1995 movement seems to be the consequence of the actions of the movement in itself together with a favourable public opinion. This lends support to the joint effect model. The movement was encouraged by allies both in political parties and among intellectuals, however this support was only symbolical. Moreover where the opposition could have played a role and increased the level of success of the movement by opposing the government's vote, it failed. This downplays the role played by allies which may seem to be a contradiction according to former theories. However, it is important to remember that this is a *reactive* movement, appearing in opposition to the government. It is therefore very hard for allies to influence the preferences of the majority. Additionally it has already been noted that while parties in opposition may be more inclined to be allied with movements, they are less able to provide concessions (Kriesi 1995).

4.4 The movement of 2003

I will here first present a short timeline of the movement of 2003 before I discuss the reasons why one can consider that it failed to reach its stated demands.

4.4.1 Timeline

Jacques Chirac, won a resounding victory in the shock election of 2002 with the record-score of 82,2% of the votes. This surge in votes for Chirac was because he faced the controversial

candidate, Jean-Marie le Pen, from the extreme right-wing party Front National. The result secured Chirac a high legitimacy, an argument which he would later use to legitimate reforms. The presidential debate had been more right wing than before the 1995 election, and focused more on themes such as security and austerity (Miguet 2002). This was a window of opportunity for pension retrenchment both because of the strong election victory in 2002 and because of the focus on conservative policies in the presidential campaign.

In April the government met to discuss a possible pension reform. The draft produced by these discussions excluded touching the "regimes speciaux" as it had been much contested during the 1995 movement. Bringing public contribution years to 40 and private contribution years to 41 was however one of the prime measures. Appearing on national television the Minister of Social Affairs claimed that a reform was the only possible answer to the difficult times that France was going through. The unions responded in a unitary fashion expressing their discontent with the planned reform. Some, such as the CGT and FO, demanded an outright withdrawal of the reform, whereas, CFDT and CFE-CGC favoured negotiations. May 13th the movement organized massive strikes and demonstrations. During this "day of action" many teachers joined the movement against the reform (Béland and Marier 2006). National education was already engaged in a strong mobilization against the government's plans of decentralization which would entail that the responsibility for around 100 000 teachers would be transferred to departments or regions. This was seen as trying to dismantle national education. As these two mobilizations converged the day of action proved very contentious with almost 60% of public workers being on strike and between 1 and 2 million people demonstrating in the streets everywhere in France. This frightened the government which quickly engaged in negotiations with the two most reform friendly unions mentioned above. These obtained certain concessions such as higher minimum pensions, adjustments above inflation, and full pensions to young workers having had a long career. Thus the two unions announced their support for the project whereas the CFTC refrained from further opposition (Béroud and Mouriaux 2004: 70).

This was a heavy hit to the protest potential of the movement. Nevertheless they managed to mobilize the 25th with several hundred thousands in Paris alone and also the 3rd of June when between 450 000 and 1,5 million citizens demonstrated. The strikes, however, were less encompassing and the movement did not manage to block the country in the same way and hurt important strategic or economic interests. A very interesting event occurred the 15th of

June. Around 30 000 people demonstrated in the streets of Paris in favour of the reform and against the demonstrations. This surprising march was organized by committees of public transport users (Le Figaro 2003). They claimed representing the silent majority, and were an important support for the government. June 19th the movement against pension reform mobilized again, however only 320 900 joined in the demonstrations according to the unions. At the same time socialists in the parliament tried to oppose the movement, stalling debates by proposing countless amendments. Due to the summer holidays the movement lost all its momentum, and only sporadic demonstration occurred during the month to come. The long-lasting debates and amendments did postpone the voting of the bill. However, the reform was finally voted the 24th of July. The opposition appealed to the Constitutional Council arguing that it was against the constitution. August 22nd the Council announced that the law did not breach the constitution and could therefore be promulgated.

4.4.2 The outcome

In this case there seems to be an evolution of the goals of the movement. There is a strong denunciation of the reform, from all parts of the movement. A complete withdrawal of the reform is however only pronounced by the most radical parts, whereas reformist unions such as the CFDT and the CFE-CGC demand negotiations on the content of the reform. The first statement, signed by all unions, demanded the withdrawal of the reform, but also the need to make changes to the existing system (Béroud and Mouraux 2004: 58). As time passed and the two reformist unions were approached by the government their goals changed to providing for their members. The other parts of the movement continued demanding the complete withdrawal of the reform.

Establishing the outcome of this movement proves more difficult than for the other movements. For parts of the movement this was a resounding defeat. They obtained some concessions, but overall their prime goal was never attained. For the other parts of the movement this is slightly different. Providing for their members seemed to become more important than the withdrawal of the reform. As such they did obtain some concessions that seemed to please at least the leaders of the unions. However, their initial demand was not a success. As Béroud and Mouriaux (2004: 59) point out, the text only contained five small corrections. Having said this I still refer to this movement as a failure in general because the movement's initial goals were not fulfilled. The "intersyndicale" had clearly stated that they

wanted the alignment of the two regimes withdrawn, and when this was not met it is clear that it was a failure. This is further strengthened by the fact that the following years CFDT lost around 80 000 members, indicating that rank and file were not happy with the decisions of the leadership (Le Monde Diplomatique 2010).

4.4.3 Why did the 2003 movement fail?

Although the 2003 and 2010 movements are different from the other movements in the way that they did not obtain a favourable outcome, they will still be analyzed in the same way. First I will assess the direct actions of the movement. Secondly I will concentrate on allies, public opinion and the role of authorities.

Internal variables

Disruption and size of the movement

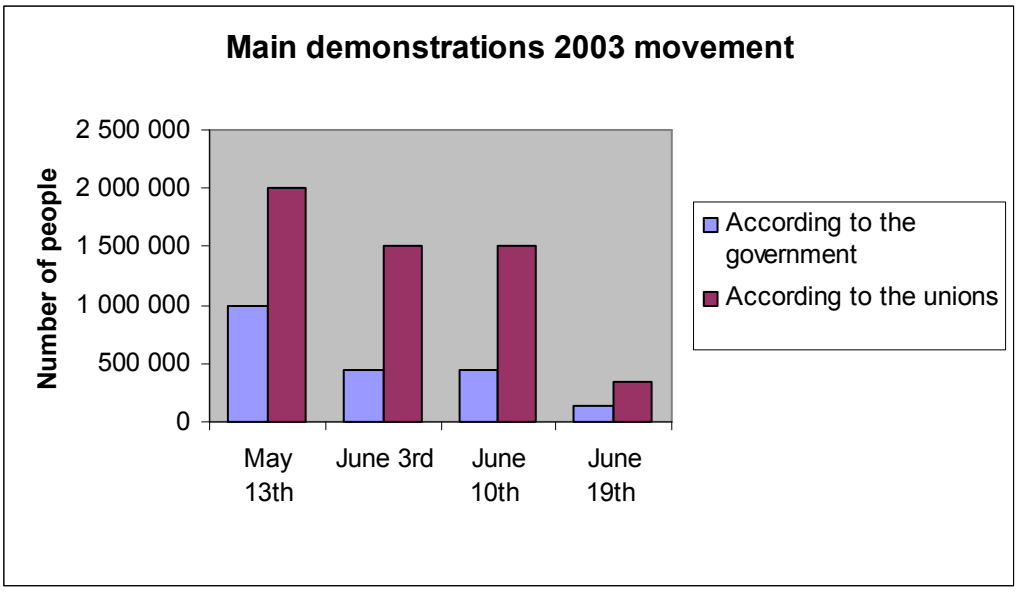
The disruption of society was fairly extensive. There were numerous strikes and big demonstrations throughout the country. The strikes were primarily organized in the field of transportation, but also within education. The 13th of May for example 62% of the SNCF and 90% of RATP were on strike (Béroud and Mouriaux 2004: 58; La Tribune 2003). This caused most buses, trains and metros to be blocked. In national education the numbers were just as impressive. 65% of all high school personnel refused to work this day. Both regarding SNCF and education the mobilization was stronger than during the 1995 movement. The strong mobilization however, dwindled as time passed and summer approached. Following the announcement of the CFDT that they supported the reform there were only half as many people striking the 3rd of June compared to the 13th May (Béland and Marier 2006: 306). There was a lack of continuity in the movement. This downward trend proved to the government that it could win.

When looking at official statistics one sees that approximately 4.5 million work days were lost due to strikes in 2003 (Groux and Pernot 2008: 87). This is markedly lower than in 1995. It is also interesting to note that the biggest difference between the two years is the conspicuous absence of private sector strikes. In fact the private sector accounts for less than 1 million of

the work days lost. It indicates that the biggest failure to mobilize seems to be located within the private sector and not the public sector as one might think.

The disruption of French society still hurt the economy, which participants of the reform had expressed fears of already from early May (La Tribune 2003). According to INSEE (2003) the movement cost France the equivalent of 0.05 percentage points of economic growth in 2003. This is a substantial amount. However, the consequences pale in comparison to other mobilizations such as movement in 1995 which cost between 0.2-0.3 percentage points of economic growth. This movement was thus less consequential and had less dramatic economic consequences than the 1995 movement. Therefore, the negative inducements put on the government were less substantial than in 1995. The movement failed to threaten the government of a prolonged and costly conflict. This can be said to be a contributing factor to the final outcome of this movement.

Figure 3: Main demonstrations 2003 movement



Source: Béroud and Mouriaux (2004)

As can be seen from figure 3, there were huge demonstrations in France during the months of May and June in 2003 against the "Fillon-reform".[13] These numbers are certainly higher than

[13] It is interesting to note the extreme difference between union estimations and official statistics provided by the Minister of the Interior. This big discrepancy is normal in France, but has gotten more pronounced during the past years. It is partly due to a difference in the way to count demonstrators, but it is also a way for either part to indicate a strengthening or weakening of the movement and therefore influence public opinion. This discrepancy

in 1995. In terms of size this should put a higher constraint on authorities since it would lead to more disruption and because it would increase media-attention. In the beginning demonstrations thus signalled a stronger message of opposition than in 1995. However, there is a downward trend. Between the first and second mobilization demonstrations were 25% lower according to the unions and over 50% lower according to the government. This gives a sign, not only to the movement itself, but also to the government, that mobilization is dwindling and losing strength. The strong signalling effect the movement had enjoyed in the beginning faded, giving indications that the movement would not be able threaten the re-election of politicians. This was all the more significant since the next elections were in four years. By the 19th June the number had dropped even more, and it was the de facto end of the movement. This shows that whilst some demonstrations may have been stronger than in 1995, the movement failed to frighten the government of a prolonged conflict due to its rapid decline.

Characteristics of the movement

Also when it comes to other tactical aspects such as variety and novelty these failed to come up with something new. Among other extreme events a MEDEF[14] local office in la Rochelle was torched, several others tagged, and the harbour in le Havre blocked (Reuters 2003). However, these events were minor happenings that are not the result of a thorough tactical evolution. Due to the illegal nature of the former it is unlikely that this in any way was helpful for the movement.

Social Movement Organizations

At the outset of the movement CGT, FO and CFDT seemed to be on the same line of argument, namely that the reform was unjust and had to be withdrawn according to the first, or negotiated according to the latter. The 7th of January CGT, FO, CFDT, CFE-CGC, UNSA and FSU made a common declaration. This declaration made clear that a reform of the pension system was needed but that keeping the legal full retirement age at 60 was important (Cited in Béroud and Mouriaux 2004: 189). This symbolic element was not touched.

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has been increasing in the last ten years. Le Figaro, 'Les Manifestations Sont Devenues Des Référendums ', 12 October 2010a.

[14] Primary employers union in France

However, by increasing the number of years one had to have worked before acquiring full retirement the government made it much harder for anyone to achieve full retirement at 60 according to the unions. The CFDT, perhaps surprisingly, denounced the government of being short-termist and proposing insufficient measures (Béland and Marier 2006: 306). Since the unions managed to agree on a call for strikes and demonstrations the 13th of May, the government moved quickly and started negotiations with CFDT and CFE-CGC. Both unions declared the 14th that they opposed the amendments that had come from the government. However, the following day an agreement was met and the two unions announced their clear support for the reform. This was seen as an apparent act of aggression by the other movements to an even greater extent than in 1995 because of the fact that they had engaged in active discussions and negotiations with the government. One could argue that the unions here exhibit signs of caring more for their own survival, than for actually achieving their stated demands (Piven and Cloward 1977). There are thus unambiguous signs of factionalizations between the reformist unions supporting the reform, including CFDT, CFE-CGC and CFTC, and the more radical unions such as the CGT, FO, UNSA and SUD who all opposed the reform. They continued the mobilization but it was quickly clear that they had lost momentum. This is completely in accordance with the lessons of Gamson (1975) and Tarrow (1993) who state that movements facing factionalizations are much less likely to achieve favourable outcomes, and perhaps especially in France. Just as predicted factionalizations among unions led to smaller demonstrations, less united and consensual demands and generally less sustained opposition to the government. This event also helped legitimate the government's claim that reform was needed and supported by most French.

External variables

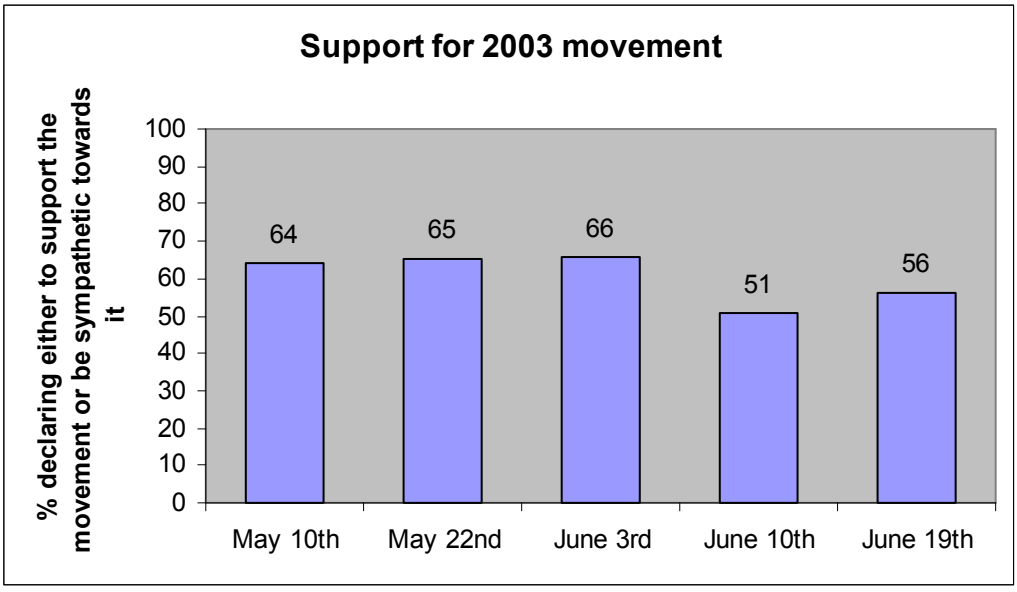
Allies

When it comes to the institutional allies these were mostly located in the opposition among the parties of the left. As in 1995 the role of the socialist party is problematic. In 2002 the PS supported some of the measures of the reform which may have hurt the credibility of their opposition (Libération 2003c). Especially in the beginning they hesitated in supporting the movement. In fact, it was more a criticism of the way in which the reform had been put in place than the reform itself. This lack of initial support may have inhibited the movement's mobilizing, as would be predicted in the literature (Giugni 2004; Tarrow 1998). As the

movement continued, the PS got more and more sympathetic, at least symbolically and publicly, towards the movement. This support materialized in heated debates in the parliament. Socialists proposed between 2000 and 3000 amendments, all the time claiming not to want to stall the debates. It was an effort to show governability by proposing a different reform. The communists on the other hand proposed 6 354 amendments severely slowing the debate in the parliament down (Les Echos 2003a). Still, stalling the debate down could do little to change the outcome. As in 1995 the allies failed to play the role they could have and the presence of these allies proved to be of little importance. The impotence of allies is linked to the weak mobilization by the movement. The movement did not manage to keep up pressure on the government once the proposal entered parliament. It is also interesting to note that the stalling pushed the debates further into the summer holiday and as such made it harder for the movement to continue mobilizing.

Public opinion

Figure 4: Degree of support 2003 movement



Source: CSA (2004)

I concentrate here on the evolution of public opinion of the movement. When asked how they viewed the movement 64% declared that they either supported it or were sympathetic towards the movement. This is higher than for the 1995 movement. There is a steady rise until it abruptly falls between the 3rd and the 10th of June. The trend is the complete opposite of the

1995 movement. A drop of 15 percentage points is a substantial change and it is likely that it actually represents a shift in public opinion, especially since the exact same questions were asked both times (CSA 2004). This had two consequences: 1). It gave an important cue to the government that the tides were turning and that the opposition towards both government and reform would subside. In other words, the before-mentioned signalling effect diminished. 2). It was a heavy hit for the unions. Even though they still claimed to have the majority of the public on their side, the trend was clear and the movement was losing support. At the same time there was a gradual decline in demonstrators. These two trends are probably entwined. As fewer and fewer people support the movement, fewer people will demonstrate. However, as the movement dwindled in terms of participants it became clear that the movement would lose and therefore fewer people would support it. This interesting pattern may explain why the movement failed in providing the participants with a satisfactory outcome. When the movements started losing popularity the authorities knew they were on the right track and the electoral fears that they may have had before subsided (Giugni et al. 1999).

Authorities

The actions and strategies of the authorities clearly influence the chances of success for a movement. The 2003 movement has been used as the prime example of this. The government deliberately chose to introduce the movement close to summer so as to limit the mobilization potential of a possible movement. Also the strategic bargaining with the CFDT and CFE-CGC kept the movement from gaining leverage and opposing the government's reform. This has brilliantly been identified by Béland and Marier (2006).

I will here point out two additional measures taken by the authorities that made life more difficult for the movement. The first concerns the extensive framing of the reform as being indispensable for the well-being of the French economy. This framing is not unique and was also seen in 1995. However, what also existed was framing concerning the nature of the legitimacy of the government. As seen before, Jacques Chirac was re-elected with 82% of the votes in the second round in 2002. The authorities expressed several times a belief in their own legitimacy even to the point that the Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin exclaimed that "the Parliament must decide, the street must demonstrate, but it is not the street that governs". He also explicitly mentioned that the government "has a nice majority" (Béroud and Mouriaux 2004: 69). It is therefore clear that the government both felt like it had the majority

on its side, and tried to convince bystanders that they have the legitimacy needed to conduct such reforms (Libération 2003a). Bernard Thibault, leader of the CGT, denounced the government for using the election result to legitimize unpopular reforms (Libération 2003b). The other part of the strategy I would like to highlight is the fact that during the end of May the government made clear that there would be no payment for strike-days. These days could not be taken out as holidays (RTT-days in French), and the removal of salary would be taken from one or two months' salary and not a few days for several months which had been the practice during many previous conflicts (Le Monde 2003). The government stated that they were just applying "the law, nothing else than the law, but the entire law"[15]. The unions on the other hand denounced the government for trying to keep workers from striking since the economic consequences of having 10 or 15 days of pay deducted from a month's salary would be devastating for most workers. This probably kept many people from striking and it was an important reason why protest was diminished (Le Monde 2003).

To summarize

The failure of the 2003 movement to obtain a favourable outcome can be attributed to several factors. First is the relative lack of negative inducements that the movement put on the government. It did not manage to block the country and pose a serious threat and the slow rapid decay of the movement during June signalled to the government that opposition was residing. This is partly due to tactics put in place by the government in order to prevent the mobilization of workers mainly through the placement of the vote, the strict interpretation of the rules regarding strike days and thirdly the strategic bargaining done by the government in order to tempt certain unions to shift side. Coupled with this is the negative trend in public opinion that can be traced throughout the movement. This gave cues to the government that the movement would dwindle and gave incentives not to concede anything. It is also important to note the failure of institutional allies to play a role in the movement.

[15] In French "La loi, rien que la loi, mais toute la loi"

4.5 The movement of 2006

For this movement I will present a brief timeline, after which I will discuss the outcome of the movement. Following this I will explain why this particular outcome occurred drawing on the theories and variables identified before.

4.5.1 Timeline

The political context of the 2006 movement seems fairly different from the 2003 movement although President and Parliament remain the same. After a resounding defeat in the referendum for the new constitution of Europe in May 2005 Raffarin stepped down as Prime Minister. It was thus a weakened executive and majority that sought to continue to rule for another two years. The new Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin, a close friend of the President, was seen as a potential successor to Chirac, and this was an opportunity to position de Villepin for the upcoming election in 2007 (Kesselman 2007). De Villepin's presidential aspirations surely affected his behaviour, which will be further debated below.

The "Contrat Premier Embauche"[16] (CPE) was actually part of a larger bill called "l'égalité des Chances" containing numerous laws and reforms. It was supposed to make the working market more flexible. The CPE regarded the flexibility of youth contracts. In fact, employers hiring a youth (younger than 26) on this type of contract could wait two years before giving a full and long-term contract. During this "consolidation period" the employee could be fired at any moment without having the right to know the reason for the firing (Palheta 2008: 170). This law must be understood in the aftermath of the riots in France in the autumn of 2005 where the death of two teenagers gave birth to important riots that shook "banlieus" all over France. One of the underlying causes of this riot was the lack of employment among marginalized youth in these areas. In fact, over 20 % of young people between 15 and 24 were unemployed in 2005, which is the double of the national average (Duprez 2006: 507). The CPE was thought to be an answer to the problem of youth unemployment generally and especially among youth from these areas (Kesselman 2007).

[16] First Employment Contract

De Villepin announced the addition of the CPE to the package of laws the 16th of January 2006, without negotiating with the unions beforehand (Lindvall 2011). The debate in the Assembly started the 31st. Only the CGT had called for demonstrations this day and the mobilization was not very strong. By the 7th of February all the student unions had denounced the plan and the worker unions called for a day of action. This mobilization did not attract a huge crowd and few believed that a real movement would be able to mobilize. The movement started among students in the least selective and biggest institutes, for whom the CPE would be the most destructive (Perrin 2011). At the same time the debate in the assembly was slow and ridden with obstructions by the opposition, proposing numerous amendments and points of order. The Prime Minister, seeing that progress was slow, decided to use a controversial measure in the French constitution, namely the 49-3. The parties of the left were furious with the decision of the Prime Minister, but the law was still adopted (Obono 2008: 161).

At the same time as the debates in parliament took place the movement started to take form. It was a slow-starter compared with the other movements (Perrin 2011: 18). An important turning point came in the end of February. The five main unions announced their outright support to the student unions, which is very rare in France (Kesselman 2007: 22). This gave renewed belief that the reform could be opposed. Despite this, the law was adopted by the Senate the 1st of March. The socialists then appealed to the constitutional council in an effort to oppose the law legally. The 7th of March a "day of action" took place, reuniting around 1 000 000 people according to the unions and 400 000 according the police. The ones mobilizing the strongest were the students both in high school and in University. Up to 38 universities were already on strike by the 7th. De Villepin stated that he would continue with the reform and grant no concessions. The government did try to organize certain meetings with the unions, but these all failed because the unions refused to negotiate as long as the reform was not withdrawn (Lindvall 2011: 310). The movement continued and gained in importance all through March. The 18th between 530 000 and 1 500 000 were demonstrating in the streets. The 23rd 450 000 students took to the streets. These numbers paled in comparison with massive demonstrations the 28th of March and the 4th of April, which both reunited around 3 million people (Kesselman 2007: 22). At the end of March ¼ of all high schools and ¾ of all universities were more or less blocked (Lagrange and Oberti 2006: 1).

The 30th March the constitutional council announced that the law was not opposed to the constitution and could therefore be promulgated by President Chirac. The following day

Chirac promulgated the law, but also asked parliament to immediately pass a new law that would reduce the time of the CPE to one year and make sure that employers would have to give a justification for firing a person under the CPE-contract. No contracts should be signed not including these measures (Perrin 2011). Following the massive demonstration of the 4th of April the Prime Minister agreed to negotiate with the unions the 5th. The 10th, Prime Minister de Villepin had to announce that the law would be retreated and replaced by a completely different law. According to the new law, the state would financially help firms hiring people without degrees from marginalized zones (Kesselman 2007). This law was adopted without much debate the following days.

4.5.2 The outcome

The movement clearly asked for the withdrawal of the CPE law. This was the most prominent goal among regular unions, student unions and associations, political parties etc. (L'Intersyndicale 2006; Libération 2006a). However, some groups also demanded deeper changes such as the withdrawal of the whole "loi pour l'égalité des chances", the withdrawal of the CNE ("Contrat nouvelle embauche"), which was a similar law passed in 2005, or a complete change of social policy (Perrin 2011). As was stated in the theory chapter, the demands and goals of movements can vary a lot (Burstein et al. 1995). Focusing on the stated demands and the ones most frequently cited in the press it is nevertheless clear that the major goal of the movement was the CPE and its withdrawal. This can also be seen in the simple fact that there was almost no contention after the law had been abrogated the 10th. The demands were thus of a re-active character (a reaction to a bill) situated on the mid-level according to the framework presented before (Amenta and Young 1999).

The outcome of the movement is therefore by and large a success. The reform was withdrawn and even replaced with another law that was supposed to alleviate some of the deeper-reaching concerns. It is interesting to note that both the 1995 and 2006 movement obtained such laws. However, as in 1995, the situation did not change in any significant way and the underlying grievances stayed the same (Kesselman 2007). This is also highlighted among the unions (Le Progrès 2006a). They seem happy for the success in bringing down the CPE, but stay dubious about the future and fear that nothing will change. This is therefore a typical mid-level success where the movement managed to oppose or at least postpone the implementation of new disadvantages, but did not manage to create a high level success

entailing a radical shift in power or permanent redistribution of resources. This success is therefore comparable with that of the 1995 movement.

4.5.3 The question of causation

Regarding whether the movement influenced the outcome it seems fairly obvious. In a counterfactual case in which there was no movement, what would have happened to the law then? It was noted that the PS was awaiting the mobilization the 7th of February in order to respond in the best manner (Le Progrès 2006b). Without the mobilization Nicolas Sarkozy would have little to gain from opposing the reform. In fact he would probably decrease his chances of re-election. What seems to have happened is that the movement became part of the opportunity structure for Sarkozy, allowing him to expose the weaknesses of de Villepin. It thus seems highly likely that the movement did influence the outcome.

4.5.4 Why did the 2006 movement succeed?

As with the other movements I first assess the internal variables relating to disruption and the tactical repertoire, as well as the SMOs. Thereafter I highlight the external variables such as allies, the authorities and public opinion.

Internal variables

Disruption and size of the movement

The disruption of society was here quite different than in the other cases. Since public agents striking were not the main weapon, as had been the case in 1995 the country was not blocked in the same way. Instead students and pupils were at the forefront of the movement. They still managed to disrupt society profoundly. This was not economic disruption, but more related to property damage and the obstruction of public places and roads. Although it was a tactic that was less employed than during the 2005 riots, burning cars was used occasionally by the most radical segments. In fact the movement remained very radical. For example, between the 8th of March and the 25th of March 450 police had been hurt and over 1420 people arrested (Lagrange and Oberti 2006: 13). According to the Collectif Assistance Juridique (CAJ) CPE

(CAJ 2006) 4350 people were arrested during the events between February and April. This is a substantial number and far higher than other similar mobilizations. CAJ (2006) explains this by contending that it was simply the responses from the authorities that were much stricter. Of the 4350 people arrested during the movement only 15% were presented before court. According to the CAJ this is due to a lack of evidence of violent behaviour. There is notable proof that several people were severely injured by the police. For example Cyril Ferez went into a coma after interacting with the law enforcements (CAJ 2006).

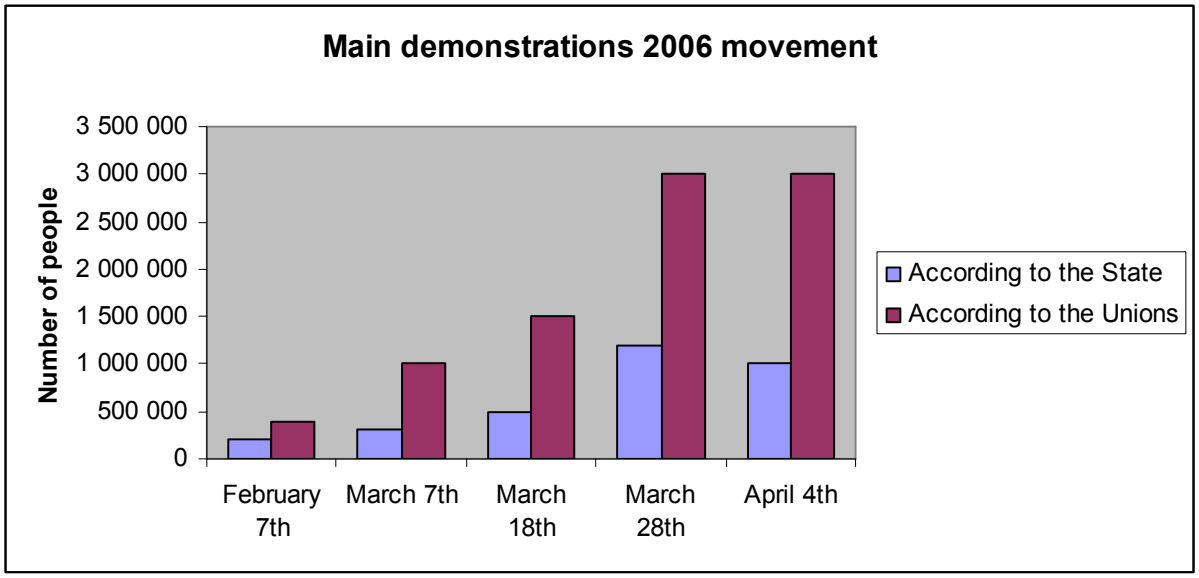
This is evidence of the fear that the authorities experienced towards the movement and the validity of the threatening mechanism. The state especially feared that radical students would find common cause with youth from the banlieus and that one would experience the same scenario as in 2005 (Perrin 2011: 35). This could also been seen through speeches of the Prime Minister and then Minister of the Interior, Nicolas Sarkozy, which is exactly what the theory on disruption tells us. By threatening the interests of the state namely social order, the movement managed to force a response from the government. Losing control of social order could entail economic damage and would make the authorities less credible on security issues which had been one of the prime focuses of the 2002 presidential campaign. The interests were also personal as both Dominique de Villepin and Nicolas Sarkozy sought to strengthen themselves in front of the presidential elections of 2007 (Kesselman 2007). This response was first one of hardness and of repression. But when not even the promulgation of the law and important concessions from President Chirac could stem the mobilization the only possible solution for the authorities remained to abrogate the law.

Numerous violent incidents also occurred in high schools all around the country and especially in parts of the marginalized municipalities of "Ile de France", in locations such as Nanterre and St. Denis. The most important incidents included students from outside of the school (generally from professional high schools which are more precarious than regular high schools) coming to occupy other schools that had not yet been blocked (Lagrange and Oberti 2006: 11). The demonstrations often took a radical turn as well, with masked youth robbing the demonstrators and fighting and provoking the police. In the demonstration of the 23rd there were between 1000 and 2000 of them (Lagrange and Oberti 2006: 13). This created a problem for the movement as it was clearly going over the edge when it comes to violence. Although the value of disruption and violence for movement outcomes has been given somewhat contradicting importance in the literature (Tarrow 1998), it is clear that the

behaviour seen during the 2006 could easily become problematic with regards to the outcome. In particular since this goes against laws and democratic practices and principles, and may frighten off potential participants (Mansbridge 1986; Soule and Olzak 2004). This did not however happen. In fact the movement gained in importance and the 28th even more people were in the streets than ever since 1995. The number of masked youth however dwindled. As Lagrange and Oberti (2006: 14) note, the marginalized youth of the "banlieus" even joined the mobilization the 28th, and participated with other youth from different social classes and milieus in the demonstrations. So although the movement's radical nature was of concern, it did not prevent the success of the movement

When looking at the size of the movement one is immediately struck by the increasing number of people that poured out in the streets as the movement continued. From its slow start in the beginning of February it reached impressive proportions in the end of March and beginning of April. This certainly put a lot of pressure on the politicians threatening social and political order. It furthermore signalled an increasingly strong contention within society that could prove dangerous for the 2007 election. The signals that government received regarding the unpopularity of the reform were stronger and stronger and showed no signs of residing, thereby obliging authorities to react with concessions.

Figure 5: Main demonstrations 2006



Source: Obono (2008)

Characteristics of the movement

When it comes to variety the CPE movement sets itself apart from the other movements. The movement still depended on demonstrations and strikes as seen in the discussion around the size of the movement, but it did not limit itself to this. One of the most used tactics was that of occupying schools and universities. Several thousand high schools were blocked and up to 2/3 of the universities. Two important institutions in French education, the "Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales" and the Sorbonne, were occupied for several days. Sorbonne in particular holds an important place in the history of French social movements especially after the events of May 1968 (Reader and Wadia 1993). For several days students occupied the University, before they were thrown out by the CRS the 11th of March (Perrin 2011: 29). The police, wanting to avoid any reoccupation of the Sorbonne closed the area around the venerable University for one month. Other measures that were used were for example the blocking of streets and the utilization of sit-ins. This could be seen in Rennes where students blocked railways tracks and roads leading to and from the city, causing hours of queue. It was also used with great success in blocking the RN20 in Orlèans, which is a vital crossroads for the functioning of the city (Perrin 2011: 22). Thus, through the varied use of different tactics employed by the students, they managed to some extent to make up for the lack of strikes among railway workers which is normally needed to block the country. These tactics and their size surprised the authorities. This surprise can be seen in the very harsh decision to close down the whole Sorbonne area, which only served to give more media attention to the movement. The variety of actions cannot alone explain the success of the movement. However, it is part of a broader mix of movement-controlled variables that put vital interests of the state into question, made them uneasy and countered some of the restrictions that had been put on striking activities which was so central for the defeat of the 2003 movement.

The movement mostly used a well-established repertoire of contention, consisting of demonstrations, strikes and occupations. A truly novel aspect however, is the use of new technology. SMS, e-mails and blogs made the movement able to quickly disseminate information regarding gatherings, news, placement of law enforcements etc (Libération 2006b). This proved to be highly difficult for police to counter. Through the use of cell phones reinforcements could be called in should there be a lack of people in certain demonstrations. If a demonstrator was taken by the police, other demonstrators would quickly come to their rescue, making work much more difficult for the law enforcement. Debates

could be held in online forums which meant that students from diverse parts of the country were updated on the actions of people from all over France. Additionally, they could seek help and counsel on how to block a university or occupy a street etc. Information and tactics were thus quickly dispersed from one university to the other.

Social Movement Organizations

As for the organization of the movement this was fairly unique. First of all the most prominent actors were not in fact the regular unions. They did express their unconditional support to the movement, and helped calling for days of mobilizations. For the most part they were united and there was little factionalization and conflict between the unions. A more prominent position was played by the student unions like UNEF or FSE. They arranged assemblies and debates in schools and universities all around the country. As with the worker unions they called for mobilizations regularly. As was identified earlier in the literature review, staying united is extremely important for the outcome of a movement. This was also seen in the 2003 movement. By leaving differences aside and providing a fairly coherent and unified response to the law proposal, the unions gave the government no real opportunity to negotiate and break a deal with certain components of the movement, thereby splitting the unions and the movement (Lindvall 2011).

However, the perhaps most important facet of the organization of the movement in 2006 was the apparent lack of it. The movement seemed more autonomous and less coordinated than any of the other movements. Although the movement was in the start mostly animated by student unions, autonomous organizations started to take more and more over as mobilization increased during the end of February (Perrin 2011). The 18th of February the first national coordination meeting ("coordination national") was held in Rennes (Obono 2008: 162). Decisions were taken locally in general assemblies which voted for or against the blocking or occupation of schools and universities. Although this occurred in the other movements and has occurred in other student movements the scope at which assemblies and local debates decided the course of the movement makes it truly novel. The national coordination for students helped coordinate the different assemblies, gave unity to the movement, improved the capacity to mobilize and increased national publicity (Obono 2008: 169). This was further helped by new technology, including blogs, cell phones and e-mails. The coordination consisted mostly of non-unionized students that wanted to keep the control of the movement

out of the hands of the traditional student unions such as UNEF. This suggests that parts Piven and Cloward's (1977) thesis regarding the SMOs may be true. In fact it seems that the movement was strengthened by the non-organization of the movement. It was not condemned to the same old routine repertoire, consisting of demonstrations and strikes and influenced the variety of tactics employed by the movement. The fact that the movement was mostly controlled by a non-union appealed to non-unionized students and legitimized the movement to the great majority of students and pupils. In fact tensions rose between the national coordination and UNEF. UNEF was for example criticized for "holding back" the movement (Perrin 2011: 19). Piven and Cloward (1977) may therefore have been right when saying that organization is not inevitably positive for a movement. SMOs may in fact be more interested in sustaining themselves in a good position rather than securing a positive outcome for the movement. Since the movement was not controlled by a veritable organization the movement could fully concentrate on repelling the reform. This is the complete contrary of what was seen during the 2003 movement.

External variables:

Allies

The left parties were consistent in their support of the withdrawal of the CPE law. The left tried stalling the debates by introducing numerous amendments. After several days of debating there were still 27 articles and over 300 amendments left (Obono 2008: 160). However, as was said before, de Villepin forced through the pack of laws by using the 49-3. This seriously circumcised one of the main means of the left to help the movement. The 4th of April 11 parties of the left (many that are not represented in the Assembly as well), issued a statement denouncing the government and pleading with them to listen to the demonstrators. They also called on all citizens to join the demonstrations the 4th of April (Ouest France 2006). This suggests that support from the left was both unison and long-lasting. Parties varying from the reformist PS to the revolutionary PC joined together to oppose the government.

Perhaps the most important role of the institutional allies of the movement is the power to appeal to the constitutional council. In fact, a law cannot be promulgated until the council has pronounced its decision on the topic. The law was adopted the 9th of March in the parliament.

Immediately deputies of the left appealed to the Constitutional Council, which declared it in accordance with the constitution the 30th of March. During these 21 days many massive demonstrations would take place and therefore be able to influence the authorities. It is interesting to note that Chirac had changed opinion in the mean time, and granted important concessions. It is very unlikely that this would have happened had the law been promulgated three weeks earlier. As such the institutional allies of the movement do prove to be very important albeit in an indirect way: by buying more time for the movement to mobilize. In an otherwise hostile environment for opposition parties (the 49-3, block voting etc.), the constitutional council provides one of the few opportunities for opposition parties to actually have an influence, and nowhere is this more apparent than for the 2006 movement. This is one important mechanism that movement scholars should develop on. In fact, the lack of explicit mechanisms linking the presence of allies to a positive outcome has been deplored in the literature before (Amenta et al. 2002). One such mechanism can thus be the ability to stall debates and give the movement more time. In fact, within closed and strong states this may be the only help allies can give. This finding indicates the existence of intricate interaction effects. The first interaction is between allies and the institutional environment. The second interaction is between allies and the continued and increasing mobilization of the movement. As such the influence of allies is never independent of the institutions within which they exist nor the movement they are allied with. This finding also highlights the importance of paying close attention to the institutions of the state. One may claim that France is a strong state (Kitschelt 1986), but putting this to closer scrutiny one finds important exceptions that may influence the outcomes in a decisive way.

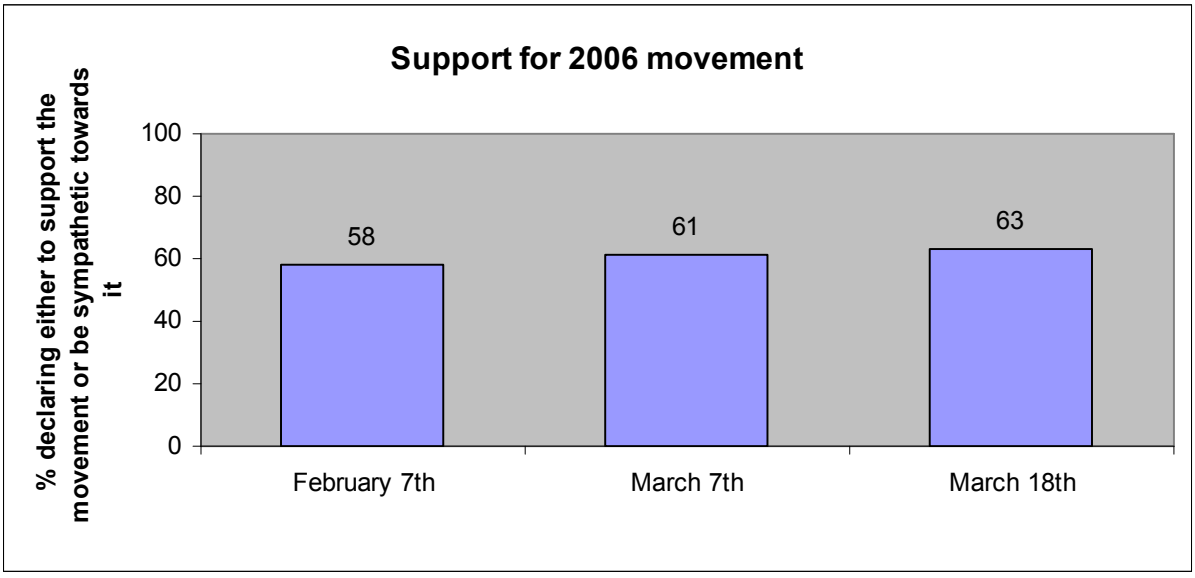
The victory of the movement was not exclusively due to the allies aid, but it was made possible by the stalling of the allies in the parliament.

Public Opinion

As can be seen from figure 6 the movement enjoys a stable or even increasing support among people. Although it is regrettable that not more dates are available a trend may still be discernable. It seems that the movement is slowly gaining support and sympathy. This is similar to the 1995 movement but directly opposite to the 2003 movement. This gives important signals to organizers and authorities as to the relative popularity of a movement echoing the mechanisms presented by Burstein (1999). When a movement is gaining in both

importance (numbers) and in popularity (public opinion), it becomes harder and harder for the government to impose the unpopular reform. This is especially true when election year approaches. The CPE-movement, taking place one year before the 2007-presidential and legislative elections, is one such case. The government risks losing support and will therefore be constrained in their choices. Thinking about re-election politicians may concede, hoping to gain in popularity. The popularity of de Villepin and Chirac did plunge during February and March. The popularity of de Villepin fell from 47 % saying they had confidence in him in January to 29 % in March. For Chirac it went from 40% to 33% (CSA 2006). There seems to be little other explanation than the movement. Seeing the immense popularity of the movement within society the government may have been tempted to try and save the chances of re-election by conceding. Sarkozy also knew how to capitalize on this and used the unpopularity of the reform to strengthen his chances by appearing sympathetic towards the movement and their claims. In this case the steady and slow increase in public opinion may be said to influence the outcome.

Figure 6: Degree of support 2006 movement



Source: CSA (2010b)

Authorities

As opposed to the 2003 and 2010 movement the authorities did not put in place special measures to make protesting harder. Except for unpaid strike days, which was not an efficient strategy against students, no evidence of the classic protest avoidance tactics was found. The

authorities did use the controversial 49-3 to stop the stalling of the vote. This was criticized by left-wing parties and the movement itself. It was seen as forcing an unpopular law through no matter the means. In some way it fuelled the protests. So did the way in which the law was introduced. No discussions or negotiations with civil society or the opposition were held prior to announcing the law in the middle of January. Condemnation of the method used by de Villepin was also present among the right. In fact, one can identify important factionalizations among the parliamentary majority. This occurred especially between Nicolas Sarkozy, minister of the Interior and leader of the UMP, and de Villepin, the Prime Minister. Although Sarkozy repeatedly denounced the movement for its radicalism, he regularly criticized the CPE and the lack of negotiations (Libération 2006a). He tried to force the government to open negotiations so that solutions could be found. One could be tempted to call Sarkozy an ally of the movement. He did provide ample criticism of the government and seemed to forward goals relative to the movement. However, it is important to identify the true reasons behind his support for the movement. It is clear that his criticism of the government was motivated by a wish to expose de Villepin as fragile and impose an important political defeat on him. This is because, as discussed before, de Villepin was the favourite to become the candidate of the right in the 2007 presidential campaign. By fragilizing the Prime Minister Sarkozy hoped to place himself in front of the election (Kesselman 2007).

To summarize

The 2006 movement was a clear success. The success is mainly due to massive and varied mobilizations, which went on over a long period of time. This was coupled with a strong and favourable public opinion that increased the fears that the party would lose in the upcoming elections. Furthermore, the actions of Sarkozy, in his quest for presidential office, undermined the unity of the majority and provided further pressure on the government. This suggests that internal divisions within the elite may make favourable outcomes more likely. Lastly the help of allies within the opposition which postponed the promulgation of the law bought time for the movement and suggests that this may be one of the crucial mechanisms by which allies may help produce *reactive* policy successes.

4.6 The movement of 2010

For the 2010 movement I first present a brief timeline. I then discuss the outcome and how it can clearly be defined as a failure. In the last part I discuss the relevant factors that can help explain this outcome.

4.6.1 Timeline

The political context in which the movement of 2010 took place was different from the other contexts. Nicolas Sarkozy had been elected in 2007 fairly comfortably winning over his socialist rival, Segolène Royal, with 53.06 % of the votes. His campaign was based on a conservative platform, emphasizing the need for both economic and social reforms. He played heavily on right-wing rhetoric, thereby largely eliminating Jean-Marie le Pen of the Front National as a competitor (Sauger 2007). During his first few years as President he enacted several controversial reforms, most famously perhaps the LRU-reform in 2009, which aimed at establishing more autonomy for Universities (Mabut 2009). The financial crisis in 2008 hit France hard and led to a surge in unemployment, reaching 9.5% in 2009 (INSEE 2009). This number was even higher for young people, particularly from disadvantaged areas around major cities. At the same time debt increased at a remarkable pace. At the end of 2010 debt represented 81,5% of GDP and amounted to 1 574,6 billion euro (INSEE 2010). Budget deficits were consistently above the 3% EU-limit. Adding to this was the demographic change occurring in France, as elsewhere. This would mean further problems of financing the generous French welfare state. It was therefore more and more clear that something had to be done about expenses. Already in 2006 Sarkozy announced that he would reform the pension system as soon as he got into power. Early in his period Sarkozy reformed the "regime speciaux" (Lindvall 2011). However, he would wait to the beginning of 2010 before proceeding with a more profound reform of the whole pension system.

The 15th of February Nicolas Sarkozy announced that he was planning to reform the pension-system in September. It was to be done in negotiation and not to be forced through during the summer as in 2003. The unions were unhappy and organized March 23rd massive demonstrations around France. Between 380 000 and 800 000 joined the demonstrations and some sectors were touched by 24 hour strikes. During April certain negotiations took place,

however many unions were not content and feared that the authorities would force the reform through. Awaiting the announcement of the content of the reform, several big demonstrations were held the 27th of May. Between 395 000 and 1 000 000 people were in the streets this day. The movement was furious when it learned, the 16th June, that several controversial measures were part of the reform. A worker having worked the required years would have to work till 62 and not 60, whereas a person, not having the required work years, would have to wait till 67 instead of 65. Negotiations were finished two days later, and the content was unitarily denounced by all unions. Just before the summer holidays 2010, the 24th of June, massive demonstrations took place, which gathered between 797 000 and 2 million in the whole of France. Certain parts of the establishment, namely Xavier Darcos wanted to introduce the reform to the parliament during the World Cup, hoping that this would quell any mobilization. Other advisors to Sarkozy advised against this and believed that the reform could be introduced without too much opposition, and it was therefore decided that the reform would be enacted during autumn (Mediapart 2010a). Just after school started again in the beginning of September hostilities began. September 7th the biggest demonstrations up till then took place, in which between 1,12 and 2,7 million participated. This coincided with the opening of the debate in the Parliament. The 8th Sarkozy announced that he would actually back down on a minor issue, namely that people who were incapacitated just 10 % instead of 20 % could take their leave at 60 (La Correspondance Economique 2010). However, this was but a minor detail, and the movement continued.

Already the 15th September was the law voted in the National Assembly. However, it would need to pass Senate as well. The movement therefore mobilized heavily again September 23rd when up to 3 million according to the organizers and 997 000 according to the police were in the streets. Fillon refused to budge and the movement continued 9 days later with demonstrations of a similar magnitude. Three days after this the Senate started examining the law. At the same time workers in several public firms such as the SNCF and especially oil refineries threatened to start renewable strikes, which they did the 12th of October. The biggest demonstrations to date happened the same day with between 1,2 million and 3,5 million people in the streets. Four days later a slightly smaller day of contention occurred. This was reproduced the 19th when between 1,1 and 3,5 million people demonstrated against the reform. University and High-School students had joined the movement earlier. At this point in time the strikes and blockings of the oil refineries started to lead to a depletion of fuel in many parts of the country. Three days later the situation regarding fuel had become quite

dangerous and police and "services d'ordre" started to clear blockades etc., in order to put an end to the strikes. The very same day the Senate adopted the law, and the 27th it was in its final version adopted by the parliament. November 2nd socialists and greens united to appeal to the Constitutional Council, arguing that the reform was against the constitution. The Council, however, ruled that the law not was against the constitution. Nicolas Sarkozy promulgated the law the 9th of November. When it started to become clear that the movement would not win a slow demobilization occurred. The 25th of October an end to the strikes was announced at most of the oil refineries, and the 29th all refineries were back to normal. Even though the law had already been adopted the movement mobilized first October 28th and then the 6th of November. Both times the number of participants was in heavy decline. It is logical that the demonstrations would not be as strong since it was after the law had been voted. These demonstrations were more to show that the movement was not dead and for some, that this was the beginning of the presidential campaign in 2012. This is illustrated through one of the banners which read "Sarkozy, you've won your retirement in 2012". UNSA, CFTC, FO and CGC proclaimed that they were against continuing the strikes. Although several unions (notably CGT and CFDT) claimed they would continue the movement by arguing that a democracy is not simply voting in an election every five years, only small demonstrations have since occurred.

4.6.2 The outcome

The demands of the movement were once again the withdrawal of the pension reform and especially its most controversial content relating to the increase of the retirement age to 62 and 67 for people having worked the required years and those that had not. Asking for the unconditional withdrawal was also accompanied by demands for negotiations and of being included in such negotiations (Le Monde 2010d). However, negotiations were not an end in itself. It is thus safe to say that, as with the other movement the demands were situated on a medium level, involving reactive demands. However, to a lesser degree than in 1995 did the movement ask for a radical change in society. The more high-level, proactive demands seem to have vanished.

It is clear that the movement as a whole was a failure. The reform plan was adopted and the contested measures were implemented. Only very negligible concessions were made, and cannot even be characterized as a minor success. Although several of the unions involved

tried to claim that it was a success in the way that the movement had been able to hold some of the biggest demonstrations France had ever experienced, it seems as more of a justification for future adherents than an objective assessment of the outcome. Nevertheless, one thing mentioned several times is the 2012 elections and what possible consequences the movement can have on this election. This is however, too early to tell, and should not be included in the present analysis of the outcome. Therefore it is safe to say that the movement failed in obtaining its stated goals.

4.6.3 Why did the 2010 movement fail?

As with the other movements I will in this part identify the causes of the failure of the movement. I first concentrate on the internal variables and later focus on the external ones.

Internal variables

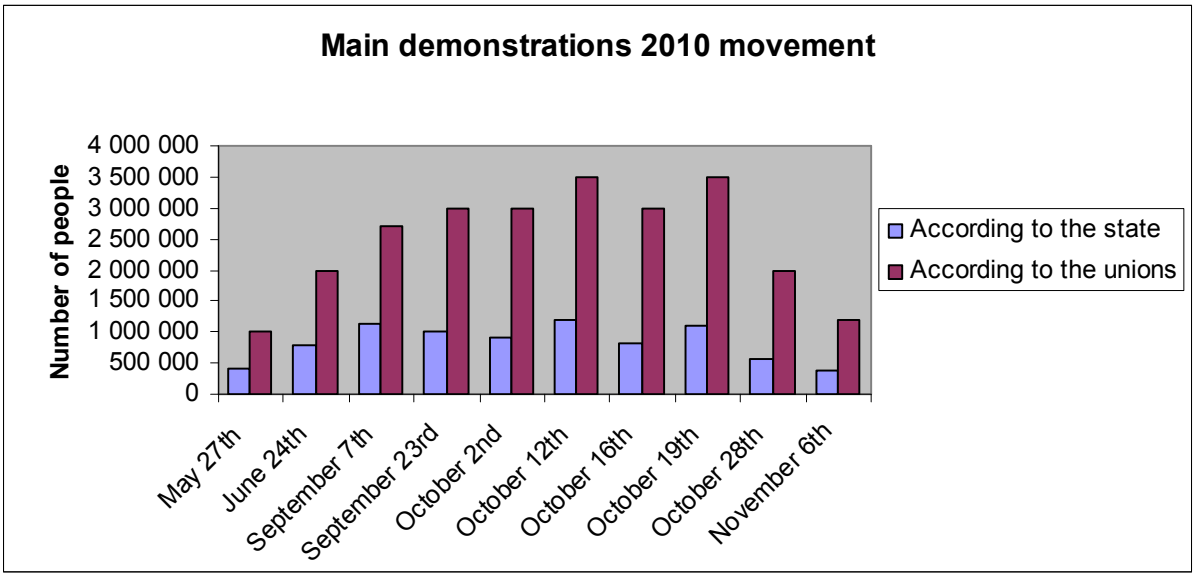
Disruption and size of the movement

From the beginning of the movement it was clear that the disruption of society was fairly heavy. The country was several times blocked partly or completely due to strikes and large demonstrations. A peculiarity is the strong presence of refinery workers. As numerous refineries started striking, fears of running out of gas quickly spread. The 16th of October as many as 12 refineries were completely blocked, seriously endangering the short term supply of fuel to stations. As people feared they would soon ran out of fuel they met up in large numbers to tank up, thus creating long queues and depleting the stations at an even faster rate. In fact by the 20th of October 1/3 of all gas stations had no or little fuel left. The government claimed to have 98 days worth of reserves, but people were still afraid (Reuters 2010). This is exactly the kind of negative inducements that according to the literature may lead the government to back down and open negotiations. The government did react, but it was with force and repression that the situation would be solved.

When it comes to the economic costs of the movement the official statistics are not yet available. However, the French minister of finance, Christine Lagarde stated that the movement cost between 1.6 and 3.2 billion euros, which would entail a loss of economic

growth of 0.08 to 0.16 percentage points (Le Figaro 2010b). This is a substantial amount of money, especially for a country that has been struggling since the financial crisis of 2008. The costs are higher than the 2003 movement, however slightly lower than the movement in 1995. The turnover in transportation moreover decreased by 1.7% mainly due to the movement (INSEE 2011). 2554, mainly youth, were arrested during the movement and several violent incidents involving youth occurred. During these incidents 72 policemen were injured (Le Figaro 2010c). The radical elements were thus fairly prominent. However, compared with the 2006 movement it seemed to propose a less substantial threat to social and political order, although it was more economically costly. The economic threat was also more profound than during the 2003 movement, albeit less than in 1995. It seems as though the threatening mechanism, although present, remained inferior to the two success movements.

Figure 7: Main demonstrations 2010 movement



Source: The Associated Press (2010)

The 2010 movement was particularly big with its massive mobilizations, five of which exceeded three million participants according to the unions. This put pressure on the government as discussed before. It was also a very strong signal to the government that the reform was unwanted. There were numerous references to the 2012 presidential elections and there was a fear that this might be very costly to the government as it had been for de Villepin in 2006. The signalling mechanism is therefore very strong. However, as I will show in the public opinion part below, the core UMP sympathizers, susceptible to vote for Sarkozy in 2012, were favourable to the reform. The authorities could therefore ignore the strong signals

it got from the movement. Another interesting aspect is the enormous differences in state and union estimates. This may be evidence that the movement tries to give an impression of strength to the general public in order to win their sympathy and to show the authorities the extent of contention within society. These are two mechanisms pointed to by Burstein (1999).

Characteristics of the movement

Regarding variety and novelty the 2010 movement seems fairly unoriginal. The main set actions remained strikes and especially demonstrations. Some note that demonstrations even seemed to take the role of the strike[17]. There were some occupations, especially of the refineries, which induced heavy costs on economy and society. This is a somewhat new tactic, but hardly revolutionary as this has occurred numerous times before. Thus the police knew how to respond to the occupations and repressed them after some time quite heavily. As such the absence of a wide variety of truly novel actions could be said to be a contributing factor to failure of the 2010 movement, especially compared with the 2006 movement.

Social Movement Organizations

As with the 1995 and 2003 movement the prime SMOs of the 2010 movement were the various unions. What is striking is the shift in alliances after the 2003 movement. In 2003 CFDT did not join the movement and sided with the government. In 2010 CFDT was firmly with the CGT calling for the withdrawal of the postponement of the legal age to 62 and 67 (Le Monde 2010b). The FO, who in 1995 and 2003 had been on the side of CGT chose to go alone in this movement (Les Echos 2010). They did not sign letters and demands signed by the other unions, but still called for demonstrations the same days. FO claimed that this was because none of the other unions wanted to call for a general strike, judged too risky by unions like CGT and CFDT which feared they would lose a place in potential negotiations with the government. Especially CFDT feared a radicalization of the movement, which would hurt their "reformist" image. Their restraint was also probably linked to the fact that many

[17] Fillieule and Tartakowsky (2008) show that demonstrations have become more popular generally over the past 20 years. In 1983 28 % could confirm that they had participated in a demonstration. By 2004 this number had increased to 55 %.

people, unionists included, did not believe they would be able to succeed. Indeed, many felt that Sarkozy would never back down (Mordillat 2011: 79).

This shows exactly the fears that Piven and Cloward (1977) voiced when they warned of social movement organization and bureaucratization. Most organizations will start caring more for their own survival than for the fulfilling of demands (McAdam 1982). Other unions claimed that FO maintained this position to appear to be more radical so as to gather more adherents. The fact that SMOs may start competing for the same people has been noted for various movements by other scholars (Rucht 2004). For the most part however, the SMOs avoided a too strong factionalization which has been seen to have detrimental consequences for the success of movements (Gamson 1975; Steedly and Foley 1979). The factionalization of the movement was not big enough to pose serious problems, especially since none of the unions explicitly took side with the government such as in 2003. In fact, the split happened to the *left* with those who wanted to go further and not to the *right* with those supporting the reform. As such the factionalization was not an important variable in explaining the failure of the 2010 movement.

External variables

Allies

As with the other movements the main allies can be found on the left, within the PS and PC. Other entities also expressed negative sentiments towards the reform. These include the centrist party of MoDem and de Villepin, former Prime Minister under Chirac, and "archenemy" of Sarkozy. They both demanded the government to review the reform and "listen to the people" (La Correspondance Economique 2010). Still, the major role was played by socialists and communists. As with the other reforms the PS found itself drawn between two cultures: one culture of opposition and one culture of government. Early on the PS seemed to be positive towards a reform and Martine Aubry announced the 17th of January 2010 that she was favourable to an increase to 61 or 62 years in order to reach full pension with enough contribution years (Mediapart 2010b). Later she would go back on this and criticize the government. Segolène Royal, the 2007 PS presidential candidate said on the other hand that the PS would revert legal retirement age back to 60 if they got into power in 2012 (Le Journal de Dimanche 2010). There were many divergent voices within the PS. Some, as

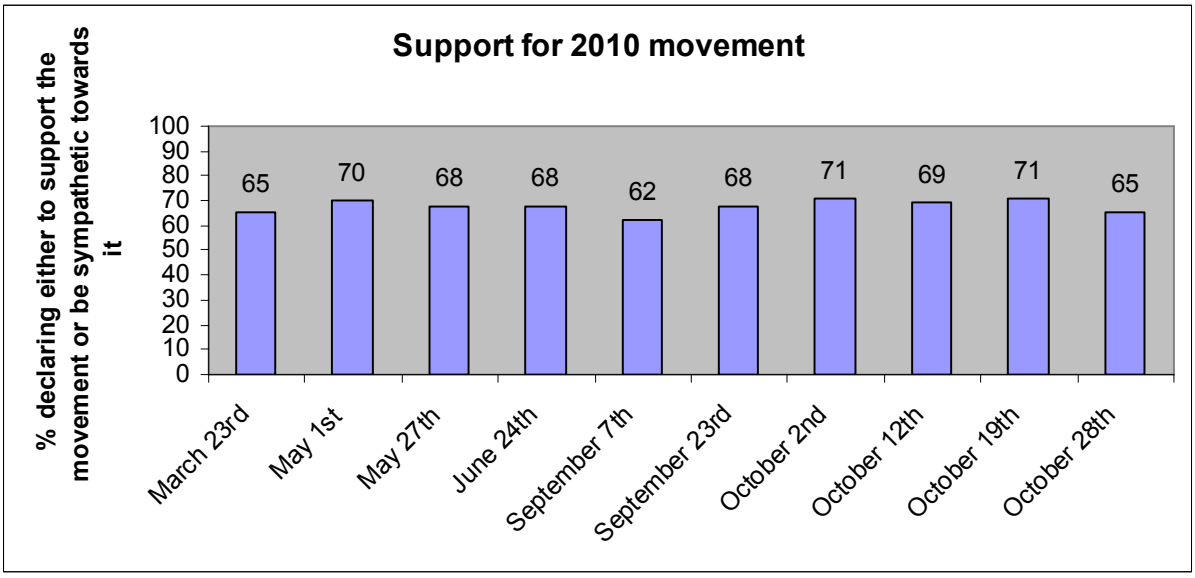
Royal, wanted the complete withdrawal of the reform and even holding referendums on it. Others wanted merely a freeze in the reforms and new negotiations. A different factor was the fact that Dominique Strauss Khan, until recently a PS favourite for the 2012 presidential elections and former leader of the IMF, had earlier advocated an increase in the retirement age (Marianne 2010b). There was thus a lack of credibility in the actions of the PS and they were not speaking with one voice. They still supported the movement and participated in demonstrations.

Once again however, we see that the PS is torn between wanting to use the movement to gather more support, and its fears of coming in a situation where its credibility is put into question. The movement, composed of many individuals that are susceptible to vote for the left, thus presented a potential for the allies. Sarkozy was seen in a worse and worse light and he was plummeting on the polls. The reform therefore presented a good opportunity for the PS, which they hope to use to their advantage. This has been highlighted in the literature as essential in order to gather support from allies (Amenta et al. 2005; Della Porta and Diani 2006; Lipsky 1968). The popularity of Martine Aubry, the leader of the PS, did increase slightly over the period. However this increase was minor and it is clear that they did not manage to capitalize on the unpopularity of Sarkozy (Le Figaro 2010d). The PS continued its support of the movement also in parliament. However, due to new constitutional rules debate time in the assembly is limited to 75 hours, which means that the PS was not able to propose as many amendments as they had been able to before. Within the Senate the reform was also pushed trough by a frightened executive. Despite these preventive measures put in place by the authorities the PS managed to stall the debates in the Senate where they and PC together announced 1 200 amendments (Le Monde 2010a). Nevertheless, the PS failed once again to help the movement in achieving its goals. Instead, it tried to use the movement to gain momentum in front of the difficult 2012 campaign (Mediapart 2010c).

There was no attempt among intellectuals to write petitions and encourage the participants of the movement as was the case in 1995 with Bourdieu (Le Monde Diplomatique 2010). Although playing only a very minor role in 1995, the lack of an organized intervention by intellectuals reinforced the impression that neither movement nor its allies could propose a credible alternative.

Public opinion

Figure 8: Degree of support 2010 movement



Source: CSA (2010a)

As can be seen from figure 8 it is hard to find any clear trend. The degree of support fluctuates between 65 and 71 % most of the time. Although there is a dip in the end it is hard to impute this to a downward trend since it is not a very big dip and especially since it has occurred before and rebounded. The degree of support is high. In fact, it is the highest for any of the movements in my study. According to much theory this should be more than enough to secure a favourable outcome for the movement since politicians will fear for their re-election. However, this is not the case. What does this indicate? This makes the point that public opinion alone cannot account for movement outcomes. It is not enough for a movement to enjoy strong public support. It seems that Burstein (1998; Burstein and Linton 2002) may be overstating the importance of public opinion. However, it may be that protest movements mobilizing in a reactive manner cannot count as strongly on public opinion as perhaps proactive movements since the costs for politicians granting the concessions may be stronger. Nevertheless, as Uba (2009) writes, it may also be that politicians only care about certain parts of public opinion. Looking at what can be said to be the core-electorate of Sarkozy, namely UMP sympathizers, one finds that they remained overly positive towards the reform. Over 70% of them judged it to be positive (Le Monde 2010c). Furthermore, only 4 % of UMP sympathizers said that the reform would keep them from voting for Sarkozy in 2012, and over 31% said it would actually increase their propensity to vote for him (IFOP 2010). Should the

government cave in to the demands of its core-electorate it could therefore cost him his re-election, even if *general* public opinion was very sympathetic towards the movement. This shows that perhaps Uba (2009) is right, and that what really counts is the core-electorate.

Authorities

I will here go through the actions of the government in response to the movement according to the protest avoidance perspective of Bèland and Marier (2006). This may perhaps be the most important part of explaining the failure of the movement. In fact it appears that both the strategies of the authorities and rules that condition the legislative debate, has changed. Thus, both the dynamic and certain statist parts of the POS have changed (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996) The political context is therefore less open for social movement influence. The first change concerns the tactical repertoire. In terms of the right to strike this is unchanged. However, due to many factors it has become more difficult to strike and therefore to use the strike, which proved to be so efficient in 1995. As in 2003 strike days are not paid and they are accumulated on one or two months of pay, which means that a worker may lose half of one month's salary. Some workers claimed to lose 70 euro per strike day which was stated as problematic for the continuation of the strikes (Magnaudeix 2010). This cost put a serious constraint on the willingness to strike among workers and thus made it more difficult to block the country. A second issue further complicated the mobilization of workers. This was the minimum service which was installed the 21st August 2007. This law had been wanted by both right-wing parties and from interest groups like "Liberté Chèrie" for several years, and the debate flourished at each big movement. The law of 2007 does not install a minimum service per se. It merely means that strikers will have to declare their intention to strike 48 hours before they go on strike in order for local authorities to arrange alternatives for users of especially transports and schools (Le Pors 2007). This had two important consequences. Firstly, it was harder for workers to mobilize since the bureaucratic rules became stricter. Secondly, because local authorities could plan better and therefore install alternatives in transports and for schools, the effects of the strikes were less serious and completely blocking the country was much harder. These rules defining the right to strike are part of what could be characterized as the dynamic POS. This can quite easily be changed and conditions and influences both the mobilization potential of a movement and its chances for success. This is exactly what happened in this case where the law on minimum service affected both of these variables (Mordillat 2011: 83). The finding further indicates that the rules which regulate

collective action has important consequences and that changes in these can influence actions. This is an area where little research has been conducted since they have mostly been taken as stable.

The second part of the strategy by the authorities to avoid movement success was to hasten up the debate in the parliament. Nicolas Sarkozy changed parts of the constitution in 2008 in order to modernize the state. Part of this change was that the assembly itself decides how much time was allocated to the debate of laws (Legifrance 2009). Certain socialist deputies criticised this reform for threatening the power of the opposition. For the 2010 reform this was limited to 75 hours in the assembly, which meant that the opposition could not stall the debate and "buy" time for the movement to the same degree as before. As such, the potential main asset for the movement was compromised. In the Senate no limit had been set as to the time because the President of the Senate did not want to impose any limits on the debate. As debates continued and the movement became more radicalized with the entry of students and youth, the government realized that something had to be done. The authorities therefore used a different measure in its repertoire, namely the "vote unique" established in article 44-3 of the constitution (Le Figaro 2010e). A "vote unique" means that there will only be one single vote for all the amendments. Even though each amendment can still be discussed, a lot of time is saved by not voting for each and everyone. This measure was heavily criticised by leftist senators, but Eric Woerth, the minister responsible for the reform responded that 120 hours had been used to debate the reform and that this was enough (Le Monde 2010c). Both these measures circumcised the parliamentary opposition and kept them from helping the movement. It is more than plausible that these measures are at least partly responsible for the failure of the movement (Mordillat 2011).

Other measures taken by the government were for example to early in August grant students important concessions especially in terms of allocations. This was thought to keep the students out of the movement and away from the streets and thereby avoiding to accumulate unpopular reforms at the same time which happened in 1995 and partly in 2003. There were also discussions among the elite on whether to introduce the reform during the World Cup 2010 (Marianne 2010a). However, this was thought to too very risky.

Once again the actions of the authorities to prevent protest seem to have had an influence on the outcome of the movement. The POS was therefore more closed to the influence of social movements. Both the mobilization and the outcome of the movement were effected by this.

To understand the strong reactions of the authorities towards the movement one needs to pay attention to two factors. The first relates to the political timing of the movement. Being so close to election time Sarkozy was obliged to please his electorate which was largely favourable to the reform as seen in the public opinion part. It is unlikely that participants in the movement would vote for him either way, so pleasing them would be costly and defectors could go to other rightwing parties and candidates. This was coupled with a favourable international political climate for reform. Mainly due to the international financial crisis there was growing concern over how solvent the French economy would be and threats of degrading the financial grade from AAA to AA caused substantial fear in French financial sectors. This provided Sarkozy with the support and the will to oppose the population and force the reform through while negating the claims of the movement (Mordillat 2011: 85). These two features show the intense complexity of movements and their outcomes. It also suggests that further research must be done to incorporate such features in existing theories and models.

To summarize

The failure of the 2010 movement can be accounted to the lack of social and economic disruption presented by the movement. Although the signals presented by the enormous demonstrations were substantial the threatening mechanism seemed to be less prominent. The lack of strikes can partly be attributed to measures put in place by the government to reduce the effectiveness of these. Although allies were present among the political parties there was uncertainty as to the sincerity of their support and as such their credibility was low. Furthermore, debates in the assembly, where the opposition could have played a role, were compromised by the majority through a variety of measures. Public opinion remained very favourable to the movement, but it was not enough to persuade the President, partly because his own electorate was strongly in favour the reform.

5.0 Conclusions:

I will in this part summarize the findings and establish the theoretical implications of my thesis. I start off by summarizing the different factors and mechanisms. Thereafter I discuss the theoretical implications and certain limitations of this study and suggest venues for future research

5.1 The main findings of the thesis

The main goal of this thesis was to explain why some movements fail and others succeed. To do this I identified several relevant theoretical variables that have been known to affect movement outcomes. These were then used to explain the four movements in this case. I will here provide a cross case summarization of the different variables.

Disruption and size of the movement

Regarding disruption my thesis suggests that the degree of movement disruptiveness is important for a movement to succeed. High disruptiveness and the threat this posed to the government was seen to be central in the explanation of the 1995 and the 2006 movement. In the two other cases, which failed, the threat of the movements was of lesser importance. This does not mean that movements will automatically succeed if they are disruptive. Indeed, it is important to remember that even in the two cases that failed, disruption was massive compared to what most movements can hope to achieve. Regarding the size of the movement this is correlated with disruption, although the 2010 movement suggests that this is not always true. The signalling mechanism remains potent in the success cases, but was not enough in the 2010 movement. In fact, even though signals were possibly the strongest in this case, the movement was unable to influence the outcome. This suggests that the most important of the two mechanisms is threat.

Movement characteristics

As for the other tactical measures, namely variety and novelty, these did not differ that much. Tilly (1986) indicated that the repertoire of movements rarely changes, and as such it is not a big surprise that novelty regarding the repertoire was found to be lacking. What was found however to change the outcome was the use of new technologies which helped circumvent the

police, increase the size of the movement and help to the diversity of the repertoire. Regarding variety the most varied movement was successful. However, it is clear that a movement can be successful without using a wide variety of tactics, such as the 1995 movement did. One cannot either say that this is a sufficient condition as it is impossible to exclude the existence of other movements, employing a varied repertoire that did not obtain favourable outcome.

Factionalization and bureaucratization

Regarding the last of the internal variables it seems that a movement can be successful both in the absence of strongly bureaucratized SMOs and in the presence of such. The 2006 movement shows that a movement that is not hierarchically organized, but rather dispersed and decentralized can achieve substantial results. This was clearly helped by the use of new technologies. Regarding bureaucratically organized movements they are clearly penalized when they appear factionalized. This was especially true for the 2003 movement. Whereas the 1995, 2006 and 2010 movements were fairly united, the 2003 movement saw heavy factionalization. Once again it is apparent that no single variable can explain everything.

Allies

Regarding the external variables I find that the role of allies is dubious. Every single movement had their share of allies overwhelmingly situated within the opposition among the parties of the left. Generally the allies seemed to have little effect, even when the outcome was favourable, except for the 2006 movement. In fact due to the actions of the left parties in opposition and their technique of stalling, both through presenting numerous amendments and appealing to the Constitutional Council they managed to stall the promulgation enough for the movement to establish itself and gain ground so as to make it impossible for the President to go ahead without making concessions. This is an important mechanism that has been overlooked in the literature. It has the potential of being very important, but is fruitless without the consistency of the movement, which could for example be seen in 2003. This corroborates the political mediation view which asserts that movement variables *and* the political context should be taken into consideration together.

Public opinion

The second external variable is public opinion. The first thing to note is that public opinion was favourable for every movement, with over 50% expressing sympathy or support for the movement in question. This means that public opinion is not a magic remedy for social

movements. Burstein and Linton (2002) claim that when public opinion is added social movements are left with little influence. This thesis poses serious questions as to the legitimacy of this claim. Based on the 2010 movement it may seem that the opinion of core voters is the most important. However, with these four cases one clearly sees that social movement influence is not reducible to public opinion alone. The findings do, however, corroborate and build on Burstein's (1999) idea that social movements can influence the outcome by influencing the preferences of the public. This is clear in the two successful cases. In the two unsuccessful cases the movement did not manage to any large extent to influence the perceptions of the public. Thus, it is perhaps not public opinion in itself that is important. It is the degree to which the movement manages to *increase* favourable public opinion that is relevant.

Authority strategy

The final variable of interest was that of the authorities and their strategy. This has often been overlooked in the literature. There is clear evidence that in the two successful cases the authorities engaged in heavy protest avoidance tactics. This was done through framing, new laws regarding striking, laws regarding voting and the use of controversial constitutional measures. These seem to have two effects: 1). it reduces the size and disruptive potential of movements; 2). it shortens or negates debate in the parliament by pushing through the bill. These are detrimental both for the movement in itself and for its allies whose favourite mechanism, stalling, is compromised (although not completely which the 2006 case shows).

Table 2: Summarizing table

Movement	**1995**	**2003**	**2006**	**2010**
Disruption and threat	Heavy	Medium	Heavy	Medium
Size and signals	Big	Medium	Big	Big
Variety	Little	Little	Much	Little
Novelty	Little	Little	Medium	Little
Organization	Bureaucratic	Bureaucratic	Not bureaucratic	Bureaucratic
Fractionalization	Medium	Much	Little	Little
Allies	Present	Present	Present	Present
Public Opinion	High and increasing	High and decreasing	High and increasing	High and stable
Authorities	No PAT	PAT	No PAT	PAT
Outcome	Success	Failure	Success	Failure

Following table 2 it is clear that a movement that either manages to remain fairly united or without any hierarchical formation stands the best chance of succeeding. Disruption and size, through their threat to social order and signalling of discontent influence positively the chances for success of a movement. Negotiations and moderation will often lead to the demise of the movement, especially when factionalized. All movements enjoyed important allies. However, these are not a guarantee for success, and will rarely play an important role. They may play a secondary role through the use of stalling techniques. Public opinion, while important is not as reliable as one would think. Authorities simply do not always react to public opinion. Finally, the strategies of the authorities serve to hinder both mobilization and allies within the parliament. These considerations seem to explain quite well the different movements.

5.2 Implications of the study

The implications of my study are manifold. First of all for French movements it highlights the importance of the actions of the movement itself. Even when the odds are not favourable they can succeed. However, if the government feels strongly about a reform it will be much harder to get through, especially when faced with explicit strategies to limit movements. Allies, namely political parties, can be valuable, but remain insignificant if the movement does not manage to mobilize properly.

When it comes to reactive movements this study shows that having allies does not equal success. This questions the quintessential importance of allies for certain scholars (Tarrow 1998). In fact, since the movements mobilize in reaction to the government proposals it is hard for allies to influence the preferences of the government. Indeed it will have to use other tactics to influence the outcome. Allies will therefore often use stalling. Alone, stalling cannot account for movement outcomes. It is only in conjunction with other factors that stalling is useful. This mechanism cannot either be translated to proactive movements since stalling is exactly the contrary of what such a movement wants.

On a general note this is further confirmation that both aspects of the general political mediation model, meaning movement and political context are important, and that one should not exclusively focus on either one (Amenta et al. 2005). It corroborates the findings of McAdam and Su (2002) that indicate that threatening mechanisms are more important than

signalling mechanisms. As a side note, it becomes apparent when analyzing the movements that disruption may give strong signals in addition to threats, just as size remains threatening in addition to giving signals to politicians. As such, keeping the two mechanisms separate and contending that they constitute rival explanations may be unwarranted. The thesis also puts into question the hypothesis forwarded by Burstein (1998) that when public opinion is added, little else is needed to explain movement outcomes. The different cases show that even when public opinion is highly favourable success is not guaranteed. This thesis also corroborates a different part of his theory, namely that one of the ways a movement may have an impact is by influencing the preferences of the public, which could be seen in the rapid increase of public opinion which took place following mobilizations in 1995 and 2006. Another important aspect the need to delve into the empirical aspects of states and not content oneself with a description of a state as closed, open etc. In fact, even though the French state is very strong in many measures, important opportunities are available to social movements and their allies, namely through appealing to the constitutional council. As such movements are not condemned to failure even closed and strong states.

This also highlights the importance of the strategies of authorities, which should be included as a dynamic element of the opportunity structure and extended from a mere focus on repression and protest policing. It also implies that a learning process takes place. It means that movements do not occur independently of each other. Both demonstrators and authorities learn from past mistakes and can adopt different strategies from before. This is seen especially among authorities since they generally enjoy a greater continuity than movements. The 2003 movement learned from 1995, 2006 learned from riots in 2005, whereas the 2010 movement could draw lessons from all past experiences, obviously including movements not covered here. In many ways the 1995 movement marked the minds of policy makers much in the way May 1968 did up until then. This contingency may explain the actions of the authorities and is an indication of a learning process which to a large extent has been lacking in current research.

5.3 Limitations and future research

There are certain limits to my study. The most obvious is the problem of inference. Although my main objective was not to generalize to the whole population I still wanted to make limited generalizations relevant to general social movement literature. My study does not

contain enough cases to provide "statistical significant" results. As such I am very careful when discussing the relevance for my study outside of the particular cases in question. I therefore use words such as "strengthen" and "corroborate" to designate my findings. Including more cases and thereby strengthening my results could be done using different methodological devices, such as the Qualitative Comparative Analysis method. This has been used in several studies of social movements (Giugni and Yamasaki 2009; Amenta et al. 2005) and helps making sense of intricate relationships among a medium amount of cases. Such a study could incorporate the many potential cases discussed in the methods chapter and test the findings highlighted in this thesis. The current study, having identified a combination of various variables that seem to yield a particular outcome, could form the necessary basis of such a research design.

Future research should also focus on a more profound understanding of governments as rational actors adopting various tactics in order to prevent mobilization and avoid being influenced by movements. The various tactics found in this thesis can and should form the basis for future studies on other movements, both proactive and reactive. These tactics should be exported to contexts other than the French one.

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